

WOMEN WORKERS  
IN  
AN URBAN LABOUR MARKET  
A STUDY OF SEGREGATION AND DISCRIMINATION  
IN  
EMPLOYMENT IN LUCKNOW ( INDIA )

( Sponsored by International Labour Organisation, Geneva )

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1982

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## PREFACE

This study of women workers in Lucknow (India) aims at portraying the characteristics and problems of women in employment market with particular focus on the examination of certain propositions on labour market segregation and sex discrimination, in an urban situation in a developing country. It is well known that only a small proportion of women enter the labour force in urban areas of the developing countries like India for various socio-cultural and economic reasons. The present study is, however, confined to the problems they face after having entered in the labour market as job seekers and employed. Thus the study deals primarily with the demand side of the labour market and examines the degree of differential treatment and discrimination, if any, the women workers receive from employers and labour market institutions in the processes of recruitment, selection, placement, promotions and earnings.

The study has been sponsored by the International Labour Office, Geneva as a part of their research programme on the Role of Women. I am grateful to the ILO for providing me this opportunity to study an important and topical problem of my own research interest, by sponsoring and financing the study. I am particularly thankful to Richard Anker of the ILO, for very valuable cooperation and consultations I had from him in the initiation of the study as well as on the various analytical issues examined.

At the Gird Institute of Development Studies, Lucknow, a team of colleagues assisted me in carrying out the study. Dr Shiv K Gupta, was associated with the study during the stage of data collection and organised and executed the field work plan. Dr Shyama Singh was associated with the project in all its stages. Ratna Wattal provided very useful assistance in documentation and referencing for the study. Madhu Rani, Meeta Deva, Mukul Pandya, Shahsi Agarwal and Saroj Agnihotri constituted the team of Field Investigators for the primary survey. S.K.Ghosh provided assistance in computation and analysis of data. MSK Rao provided the secretarial assistance in all stages of the project and typed the various drafts of the study report. I am grateful to all these colleagues for their valuable assistance.

Gird Institute of Development  
Studies, Lucknow  
July 1982

T.S. PAPOLA

## Chapter I : Introduction : Scope and Method of Study

### Segregation and Discrimination in Labour Market Theory

The notions of perfect competition, unrestricted entry, perfect mobility and single, uniquely determined, wage rates, though convenient analytical tools in the traditional theory of labour markets, have never been observed in labour markets in practice. Over the last few decades, the theory of labour markets has also increasingly taken cognisance of the highly abstract nature of these phenomena and the empirical unreality of the assumptions under which their validity could be expected. The fact of high level and persistent nature of differentiation among the units and groups of labour has been thus attempted to be analysed in terms of such concepts as segmentation and compartmentalisation of labour markets.<sup>1</sup>

The economic theory of segmentation of labour markets primarily recognises the slow process of adjustments in supply in response to changes in demand, and creation of certain kinds of barriers among the different segments of the markets, because of which inter-segmen

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<sup>1</sup> No attempt has been made here to provide a comprehensive and analytical review of the labour market theory and empirical work using segmentation-segregation-discrimination framework. Only a few major strands of thinking and basic propositions have been stated here. Bibliographical references have also been kept to the minimum, as no detailed analysis of theoretical and empirical work is attempted.

movements and entry is no longer unrestricted.<sup>2</sup> Thus the different segments function as virtually independent labour markets with their own demand and supply functions and wage levels. The wage rates in a segment are no longer determined on the basis of the overall supply and demand conditions, but on the basis of such conditions within the specific segment of the labour markets. High technology industries, for example, have their own characteristics of demand and supply of labour, which are not common with those of the small and low technology industries. Similar differentiation would exist between industry and agriculture. Thus the shortage of high level technicians and skilled workers, would not raise the wage levels of unskilled and agricultural workers, nor would the excess supply of the former would depress the wages of the latter. Similarly, the high wage differentials would continue between the high technology industry and agriculture, even if the overall supply of labour particularly of the unskilled kind, exceeds the total demand. Besides technology and skill requirements of different economic activities, another important basis on which labour markets are segmented is the space. Due to lack of geographical mobility, the demand-supply interactions and determination of wages take place on local and regional basis. Thus the labour market of a country gets

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<sup>2</sup>For a comprehensive review of the neoclassical literature on labour market segmentation, see Godwin, JFD 'The Definition and Analysis of Local Labour Markets: Some Empirical Problems', British Journal of Industrial Relations, Vol. VIII, No. 2, 1970.

segmented into regional and local labour markets,<sup>3</sup> with very little interrelationships among the various segments.

Besides occupational, industrial and spatial bases of segmentation, another aspect which has received considerable attention in the labour market analysis in the recent past, relates to the procedures and norms adopted by individual employer firms that tend to lead to the 'internalisation' of their labour markets. Each firm has its own rules, by which 'portals of entry and exit' are defined; and, the 'seniority ladders' and 'job clusters' which provide routes of movement within it. Thus the labour market are not only segmented among firms, but are 'balkanised'<sup>4</sup> in case of each firm.

All the above kinds of segmentations are, however, amenable to analysis and explanation in terms of the traditional neoclassical theory of labour markets, though each one of them goes to strongly question the validity of some of its assumptions. Segmentation by occupation, industry, space and firm is generally explained on the basis of the differentiated, non-substitutable, labour units, and lack of mobility on the one hand, and the employer's estimation of

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<sup>3</sup>For elaboration of the concept and its empirical examination see, Papola T.S., and Subrahmanian K.K., Wage Structure and Labour Mobility in a Local Labour Market, Popular, Bombay 1973.

<sup>4</sup>See Korr, C., 'The Balkanisation of Labour Markets' in E. Wight Bakke et al (eds) Labour Mobility and Economic Opportunity, MIT Press, 1954. Also Doeringer P and Piore, M., Internal Labour Markets and Manpower Analysis, Lexington, Heath, 1971.



his profit maximisation on the basis of limited or unlimited competition on the other. Segmentation based on supply to limited market or recruitment from the limited pool of supply is thus seen as a rational process resulting from the maximising behaviour of the suppliers and employers of labour.

### Discrimination

The versatility of the neoclassical theory, which is rather suspect even in the above cases the moment 'institutions' start playing important role in the labour market,<sup>5</sup> proves highly inadequate with the differentiation in the labour market based on class, race and sex which has assumed great significance due to its socio-political implications in the recent past. Issues involved here are not merely of labour market segmentation based on some techno-economic factors, but of discrimination based on certain social categories. Attempts to analyse 'racial' or 'sex' discrimination within the framework of maximisation behaviour, by taking 'discrimination' as a consumption good so that the employer though paying a price for discrimination (by not employing women or black workers available at a lower wage) enjoys it as such,<sup>6</sup> may sound theoretically elegant

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<sup>5</sup> For a critique of neoclassical explanations of the labour markets using an internal labour market approach in a broadly institutional manner, see, Robinson, D., Local Labour Markets and Wage Structures London, Cower Press, 1970.

<sup>6</sup> See Becker, G.S., The Economics of Discrimination, Chicago Univeral Press, 2nd Ed., 1971. For elaboration and empirical analysis of the 'positive' theory of discrimination by sex see Chiplin B., and Sleano, P.J. Sex Discrimination in the Labour Market, London, Mc-Millan, 1976.

and logical, but are basically axiomatic and lead us nowhere nearer the explanation.

A more fruitful line of investigation into the question of discrimination has been the one based on the dual labour market hypothesis. According to this hypothesis labour market is divided into the two sectors : one characterised by 'good', high paying and stable jobs and the other by 'bad' low paid self-terminating jobs. Workers belonging to certain social categories tend to perpetually get into the one and those belong to other categories into the other sector of the labour market. The reasons for such perpetual segregation are described by different scholars differently, but the following two interrelated approaches seem most important insofar as the segregation by class, race and sex is concerned. The first is the stigmatisation of certain groups, which is described by Leveridge and Mok as follows:

"Stigmatisation is a social process by which a dominant group attributes impurity to features of a subordinate or foreign or 'outside' group....It is normally a defence of an economically privileged position which cannot be 'rationally' justified. It is usually psychologically internalised and often unconscious. Although resulting from a group ideology, it is therefore, exercised unknowingly in everyday individual actions".<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> See Gordon, D.M., Theories of Poverty and Unemployment : Orthodox, Radical and Dual Labour Market Perspectives, Lexington, Toronto, London, 1972.

<sup>8</sup> Leveridge R and Mok A.L., Theories of Labour Market Segmentation, London and The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1979, p.6.

The other approach adopted by the neo-Marxist economists sees this subjective and individualised behaviour as reflecting nothing more than the 'objective' structural conditions of capitalism. Employers act in their own interest within the existing socio-political arrangements where concentration of production within a few large corporations produces a monopoly-monopsony situation, and the need to produce increasingly larger surplus value with increasing organic composition of capital creates the 'industrial reserve army' that is required to keep the system going.<sup>9</sup> On this phenomenon is superimposed the discrimination through 'negative feedback' of the market. "In the historical institutionalisation of markets the attachment of stigma becomes a job characteristic".<sup>10</sup> Certain occupations become 'labelled' in this way, and when combined with the inherent characteristics of groups that most often occupy these jobs, a cumulative and reinforcing mechanism of job-men stigmatisation occurs, and <sup>is</sup> made permanent through formalised procedures of recruitment, selection, placement and wage fixation.

The permanency of the stigmatisation and dichotomous process is the main feature pointed out by the dualistic and radical theorists that strikes at the heart of the neoclassical analysis of discrimination. Differentiations, according to the neoclassical theory, result from the lagged responses of supply and demand to the changing market conditions, but the market is always tending towards equilibrium, integration and equality. It is seen, however, that the

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p.7.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p.9.

differentiation based on such attributes as class, race and sex tend to perpetuate themselves and are reinforced by the institutional market and non-market - forces. Explanations of such continued and permanent differentiation is thus to be sought mainly outside the demand-supply response mechanism of the market. Even if the phenomenon appears, at first glance, to be a result of market processes, the question that needs to be investigated is why the market mechanism and practices tend to be discriminatory against certain groups.

### Sex Discrimination : Conditions and Types

Stigmatisation of women as 'inferior' workers has been a worldwide phenomenon, which is reflected in their being confined to only certain segments of the labour market and barred from others. According to one hypothesis, such a discrimination is a result of the capitalist form of production. In the pre-capitalist, small scale craft-guild enterprises, despite the women having the exclusive role as 'breeder' and 'feeder', they were also involved as 'producers' in partnership with men on an egalitarian and non-exploitative basis.

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<sup>11</sup>Cf Boulding, E. 'Family Constraints on Women's Work Roles' in Blaxall, M and Reagan B (Eds) Women and the Workplace : The Implications of Occupational Segregation, Chicago/London, University of Chicago Press, 1978. Also see, Escro, Carmen Diana, Humphries Jane and Leon de Leal Magdalena, 'Class and Historical Analysis for the Study of Women and Economic Change, for a Marxist approach to sexual division of labour, and Papola T.S., 'Sex Discrimination in the Urban Labour Markets : Some Propositions Based on Indian Evidence' for some evidence on the emergence of discrimination with 'employee' status; both in Anker, R, Devlin M and Yeussel M, Women's Roles and Population Trends in the Third World, London, Green Helm for ILO, 1981.



This relationship disappeared with the emergence of capitalist owned enterprises supervised and managed exclusively by men, and women became a part of the 'industrial reserve army'. As a result they tended to 'crowd', along with other disadvantaged groups, low paid, insecure and unstable jobs. Once this process started, the male dominated owners and managers of enterprises developed a negative attitude towards women as workers, partly to retain their own position and partly rationalising the fact of women being concentrated in lower order jobs as a reflection of their capabilities. Most of this process has, of course, gone on unconsciously, yet continuously. The laws relating to equal opportunity to men and women are found violated in spirit though not in letter, as suggested by the following conclusion of the British 'Equal Opportunities Commission' (1977) : "People in authority in British industry appear to be spending more of their time trying to circumvent the sex legislation than in implementing it."<sup>12</sup>

Once discrimination is institutionalised through social attitudes, hiring practices and norms, overt discrimination is generally less visible. Discrimination is taken for granted, and its existence needs to be pointed out on the basis of argument and analysis. This seems to be the case with discrimination of women in employment. Women are not specifically declared ineligible or disqualified for certain kinds of jobs; in fact, certain jobs are specifically

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<sup>12</sup>Quoted in Leveridge and Mok, op.cit. p.67.

identified exclusively for women, but women candidates get excluded in the process of selection, both on account of the women's belief that the jobs are not meant for them and of the employers' tendency to eliminate women. Jobs where women are specially favoured are only peripheral and too few; and, therefore, even this special treatment operates in totality against women.

Discrimination against women may manifest itself into one of the following forms:

1. Women constitute a much smaller proportion than men amongst the employed.
2. Women workers are concentrated in jobs with low pay, low career prospects, insecurity and poor working conditions.
3. Women are paid lower wages than men in similar jobs.

The first situation by itself does not prove existence of discrimination in recruitment insofar as, due to various socio-economic reasons, a smaller proportion among women are in the labour force. Women may, in general, possess lower educational and professional qualifications or may not offer themselves for jobs due to social beliefs and taboos in respect with their role in society. No doubt, their attitudes themselves are products of discrimination on the part of the society, but they act mainly on the supply side of the labour market and do not constitute directly a part of the discrimination by employers. Indirectly, of course, these attitudes do influence the behaviour of the employers as part of the same society, and thus

affect their decisions of employing men or women workers. The second situation also becomes pure discrimination in employment only when despite similar qualifications and capabilities women do not get entry into better jobs and thus get relegated to the 'poor' jobs. The third situation, of course, is a case of pure discrimination by employers against women.

A large part of the discrimination against women is found to originate in the supply conditions of female labour shaped by social beliefs and attitudes and rather irrational assumptions regarding the role of women in society. At the same time, demand based discrimination practised by the employers is more important qualitatively to the extent that it tends to resist removal of supply side discriminants and helps in perpetuating overall discrimination against women. On the demand side the discrimination becomes evident when we find that:

- i) Women candidates have a lower chance of getting employment than men;
- ii) Women candidates generally have lower chance of getting selected for 'better' jobs than they have for the 'poor' jobs; and,
- iii) Women workers are paid lower than men in similar jobs.

The first two situations are categorised under 'pre-entry discrimination', while the last under 'post-entry discrimination'. The former could be examined on the basis of an analysis of 'selection-

application ratios' of male and female candidates, and the latter on the basis of male-female wage comparison in different jobs and occupations. Post-entry discrimination could also include the progress in the career of female candidates in comparison to male candidates in similar lines of work and with similar qualification and experience. This could be done by comparing the number of promotions and average period of service for promotion, and percentage rise in earnings over similar periods of the workers belonging to the two sexes.

#### Issues in Employment of Women in India

While the issues and hypotheses stated above in regard with the sex segregation and discrimination in labour markets are commonly valid to a smaller or larger degree in most societies and economies, their extent and sometimes even the nature, tend to differ depending primarily on the social structure of development of the economy on the other. In India, the universal phenomenon of male domination in Family and society is probably much greater than in most other societies, which is reflected in the tradition of preference for male child and subsequent neglect of female children in their upbringing and education, resulting in higher mortality rates and lower literacy and education among women than among men. The declining sex-ratio over the last seven decades (from 972 females per 1000 males in 1901 to 930 females per 1000 males in 1971)



has been considered a 'disturbing phenomenon' in the context of the status of women.<sup>13</sup> This demographic statistic is probably a good summary indicator of the overall position of women in the economy and society.

The segmentation and discrimination against women in employment in India is largely a result of social values which tend to place women in a secondary position and under subjugation of men. Mobility of women is thus extremely limited, and withdrawal from participation in productive work with improvement in the economic status of the household is sometimes considered as an improvement in status. These factors contribute to women acquiring a status of 'secondary' or 'discouraged' workers, which in turn, aggravates discrimination against them.<sup>14</sup> At the same time, the social values determining the supply conditions of the female labour are not the only factors responsible for the disadvantaged position of women in labour market, which is indicated by not only a low worker-population ratio among women than among men (12% as against 53% in 1971), but also by high concentration of females in low paid agricultural and other informal sector jobs, lower wage rates for women than men even in these jobs, and a very low proportion of women in better paid organised sector jobs, and discrimination of various kinds

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<sup>13</sup> Cf. Towards Equality: Report of the Committee on the Status of Women in India, Government of India, Ministry of Education and Social Welfare, New Delhi, December 1974, Ch.II.

<sup>14</sup> Papola, T.S. 'Segmentation of Labour Markets', Indian Journal of Labour Economics, Vol.XXII, Nos. 1 & 2, April-July 1980, pp.107-111.

even in these sectors, particularly in private enterprises.<sup>15</sup>

Thus even the small percentage of women who are in the labour force get a highly discriminatory treatment in the labour market. Part of this discrimination may reflect the low educational and skill profile of the female workers resulting again from the social values, but a significant part of it is also the result of the discriminatory practices followed by the employers due both to their value framework and notions regarding women as workers and to their efforts to minimize their costs. That certain jobs have not been performed by women in the past, and that there are no or very few women in the employment have been, in themselves, the major considerations in non-employment of women, resulting in discrimination and segregation in the labour market. In the public sector, where there has been a deliberate attempt to a certain extent to break-away from these notions, women employment has registered significant increases during the recent decades. In the public sector the number of women workers has increased from 0.48 million in 1962 to over a million by mid-70's, and the proportion of women workers from 6.0 per cent to 8.9 per cent, while in the private sector increase in number has been from 0.29 million to 1.2 million, and proportion of women workers has remained constant at 21 per cent during the same period.<sup>16</sup> These figures, however, relate only

<sup>15</sup> For an excellent review of the features and evidence of segregation and discrimination against women in India, see, Swapna Mukhopadhyaya, 'Women Workers of India : A Case of Market Segmentation' in Women in the Indian Labour Force, ARTF, Bangkok, 1981, pp. 93-119.

<sup>16</sup> Towards Equality, 22.6.77, p.106.

to the organised sector, which employs only six per cent of the total women workers, 94 per cent being in the unorganised sectors including agriculture. In factories and mines in the organised sector the proportion of women workers is found to have declined during 1970's as compared to 1960's.<sup>17</sup>

So far as wage discrimination is concerned, the sex-based earnings differentials in the same occupations are not a common feature of the wage structures of the organised public and private sectors. But such differentials are an accepted feature of the agriculture and non-agricultural activities in the unorganised sectors, such as construction, processing of agricultural products, etc.<sup>18</sup> Overall, the age earnings profile of the women workers is found to be flat, or at least much less steep than that of male workers, for two reasons : one, their concentration in the unorganised sector which does not offer time-scales of pay with rising emoluments with the period of service, and two, their employment in such occupations in the organised sector, which rarely have good prospects for promotion into higher paid jobs in the establishment.

Thus there is enough evidence to suggest segregation and discrimination against women in the Indian labour market. A substantial amount of research, demographic, economic and sociological, has been undertaken to analyse the supply behaviour of female labour

<sup>17</sup> See Mukhopadhyaya, op.cit. p.114, and Indian Labour Statistics various issues.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, pp 93-101.



and to identify the socio-economic factors that tend to keep a large part of the women population out of labour force. Very little is, however, known as yet on the issue of discrimination on the demand side of the labour market. How do the small percentage of women who offer themselves for wage/salary employment fare in securing employment, earnings and conditions of work and career prospects as compared to men? Why do women workers tend to get concentrated in certain, mostly low wage/low status jobs? If discrimination is suggested by evidence in relation to recruitment, placement, wage fixation, promotions and benefits, how is it practised despite the constitutional provision of equality between sexes? are some of the important questions that constitute the focus of the present study.

#### The Present Study : Objectives and Scope

The present study is thus an attempt to examine the extent, conditions and processes of discrimination against women in employment. It focusses on the demand rather than supply side of the employment of women. The examination of the discrimination practised in employment is important also from a policy viewpoint to the extent that, in the short run, the labour market institutions and hiring practices may be more amenable to modifications and change in the desired direction, than the deep societal factors operating on the supply side.



The study thus primarily deals with the pre-entry and post-entry discrimination in employment. Starting with the fact that in the empirical situation under investigation, a smaller number of women enter labour market for employment, the study is concerned with the experience of those women who, in fact, are in the labour market. The issues of their distribution in various activity sectors, their relative proportions in different jobs and occupations, and the degree of sex segregation are discussed first in this context. Both the existing patterns and trends in recent past are examined to assess the extent and emerging situation with regard to sex segregation in the labour market.

Part of the segregation is, no doubt, a result of the differential behaviour of labour supply from workers of two sexes, with respect to different activities and occupations. But a significant part of the segregation can also result from discrimination in employment, based among other things, on the notions that the existing segregation tends to fix in the minds and attitudes of the employers. The pre-entry discrimination is examined by activity and occupation on the basis of application-selection ratios of male and female candidates. The analysis is further supplemented by examining the sex-sensitivity of various methods of recruitment, in order to see the stage at which women tend to get eliminated in the selection process. Employers' own assessment on the suitability or otherwise <sup>of</sup> women for different jobs have also been juxtaposed with the actual selection results.

Post-entry discrimination is examined on the basis of pattern of allocation of work, promotions and rise in earnings. The promotion possibilities and age-earning profiles of the workers of two sexes are compared for this purpose. Discrimination by way of differences in male and female earnings in similar jobs in current period was found to be operating only in exceptional situations; so the major focus of the earnings-based discrimination has to be on the behaviour of male and female earnings through time age and length of service, which is also closely related with promotion prospects. Earnings functions of the male and female workers are also estimated to see if the variable expected to influence earnings have any differential impact on the male and female earnings.

Finally, another aspect of the women's work, namely, differential treatment and behaviour, if any, on the part of the co-workers and employers has also been included in order to see if women face certain special problems in their jobs.

The question of the relative roles of the supply and demand factors in the low proportion of women in employment has also been examined on the basis of a follow-up of recent graduates from colleges. A study of male and female graduates has been conducted on the limited question of their entry into labour market, job search, experience in job hunt and pattern of secured jobs, with a view to examining the differential behaviour and experience of the male and female graduates in the job market.

The study of discrimination as outlined in the above paragraphs obviously applies to wage/salary employment in the establishments. A large number of women are found to work in the non-establishment sector either as self-employed and/or providing services to the households. The question of job discrimination and wage discrimination do not directly apply to them. But it was considered important to look at special conditions of women workers in such of these activities where women are found to work in large numbers. For this a few occupational groups of women workers have been studied with a view to portraying their socio-economic conditions and problems of their work - general as well as those relating to them as women.

#### Setting of the Study : Women Workers in Lucknow City

The study has been undertaken in the city of Lucknow (India). Lucknow, the capital of Uttar Pradesh, the largest State in India, had a population of 10,06,538 according to the 1981 Census of which 53.39 per cent were males and 46.61 per cent females. Overall worker-population ratio worked to 25.20 per cent; it was 47.25 among males and 5.48 among females. Of the total workers 9.68 per cent were women. Women workers constituted the following percentages of all workers in different broad divisions of activity in 1971.

**Table I:1 Proportion of Women Workers in Major Divisions of Activity : Lucknow City 1971\***

Major Activities	%
Household industry	6.09
Non-household industry	2.24
Construction	1.35
Trade and Commerce	2.24
Transport and Communication	1.40
Other Services	10.25
<b>ALL</b>	<b>6.24</b>

\*Details relating to labour force and workers are not yet available for 1981 Census.

Among the various broad occupational groups the women workers constituted the following percentages:

**Table I: 2 Proportion of Women Workers in Various Occupational Groups : Lucknow City 1971**

Occupational Group	%
<b>Division 0</b> Professional, Scientific and related workers	<b>19.65</b>
1 Administrative, Executive and Managerial Workers	1.46
2 Clerical and Related Workers	1.60
3 Sales Workers	3.06
4 Farmers, Fishermen etc.	7.56
5 Transport and Communication workers	0.41
7-9 Craftsmen, Production Process Workers, Labourers etc.	4.50
9 Service, Sports and Recreation workers	17.12
<b>ALL</b>	<b>6.24</b>



Around three-fourths of the women workers were found in the activity division 'other services'. The only other division of activity with a significant number of women workers is Trade and Commerce employing around 7.5 per cent of the total working women in the city. Occupation-wise, the service workers made the largest group of women workers, accounting for around 40 per cent, followed by craftsmen, production process workers etc, with around 24 per cent, and professional and technical workers with 22 per cent of all women workers in the city. Within the occupational group 'services', housekeepers, maids and cooks made up around 60 per cent; and cleaners and sweepers another 28 per cent. In the category of craftsmen and production process workers, tailors, cutters, sewers and embroiders accounted for around 50 per cent, and labourers around one-third of women workers. Among the professional and technical occupations, teachers in primary and secondary schools, and nurses accounted for 55 and 20 per cent respectively of women workers in that occupational group.

The following are some of the specific occupations in which women were found to constitute a higher proportion than the overall proportion of women workers to total workers in the city.

Table I: 3 Occupations With Above Average Proportion of Women Workers : Lucknow City 1971

<u>Occupational Division</u>	<u>Specific Occupation</u>	<u>% of women in Total Workers</u>
0	Doctors	10.52
	Nurses, Pharmacists and Health technicians	29.44

work (Chikan) in Lucknow city are women.<sup>19</sup> It is an important and unique handicraft of Lucknow city, but it seems most of them did not get reported as workers in the 1971 Census, as this activity is mainly carried out by housewives as a part-time activity. Yet Lucknow city seems to have a lower proportion of women workers than certain larger metropolitan towns like Bombay and Ahmedabad. The reason may be found, to a certain extent, in the structure of economic activities of the city. It is primarily an administrative centre, a large part of its workforce is to be found in government offices. Despite the disclaimers by the government against any sort of discrimination practised in employment, the percentage of women in government has been very low. According to the 1971 Census only 1.46 per cent of the Central and State Government executive and administrative officials in Lucknow were women; the percentage was equally low (1.60) in clerical and related workers category. Lack of education is sometimes put forward as a reason for this phenomenon. The literates and educated certainly form a lower percentage among women than among men; the figure for Lucknow city, according to 1981 Census are 46.61% for women and 61.49% for men respectively; but obviously this difference cannot account for so low a worker-population ratios 5.48 per cent for women as against 47.25 for men in the city.

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<sup>19</sup> Singh VB, Shrimali, PD and Mathur RS, Survey of Urban Handicrafts in Uttar Pradesh (Chikan Work at Lucknow), Girl Institute of Development Studies, Lucknow 1976; Also Towards Equality, op.cit. pp. 175-7.

Nonetheless, women are found to constitute a significant proportion of workers in certain occupations and activities with generally low wages and uncertain employment. Besides, of course, there are certain jobs which have attained a women specific character, nurses and midwives, school teachers, telephone operators, and to some extent, typists and stenographers. Women are found to be in relatively larger numbers in occupations and activities in the unorganised and self-employed sectors : domestic service, sweeping and cleaning, laundering, manufacturing activities like tailoring, sewing, embroidery, basketry weaving, pottery etc.

#### Data and Sample

The data required for this study had primarily to be collected on the basis of a sample survey, as the secondary sources such as population census provides only limited data that could at best provide only the background for the study. We, therefore, decided first to draw a sample of employer establishments in different sectors of the city. Given the time and resources constraint we decided to have a sample of around 100 establishments distributed in various sectors in proportion to the number of establishments in each sector. In effect, we covered 97 establishments. Next we intended to select around 300 women workers employed in these establishments, again in proportion to the number of workers in each establishment. Here the effective coverage of the sample came to 273. A control sample of 67 male workers in the occupations

from which female sample workers were selected, was also taken from these establishments for the purposes of comparison. These samples were distributed among various sectors of activity as follows:

Table I:4 Samples of Establishments and Establishment Workers

Activity Division	No. of estab- lish- ments	Female wor- kers	Male work- ers
1. Public Administration	10	65	19
2. Manufacturing (public Sector)	7	32	11
3. Manufacturing (Private Sector)	20	20	6
4. Construction	5	26	3
5. Trade	33	21	11
6. Banking and Insurance	2	23	2
7. Transport (Public)	1	11	2
8. Schools (Public)	4	14	1
9. Schools (Private)	11	35	5
10. Hotels	2	6	5
11. Theatres	2	-	-
TOTAL	97	273	65

Besides these samples on which central part of the study is based, two other samples were also taken : one of 35 males and 43 females



who graduated from the local university college in the year 1977, for the purpose of a study of their job search experience; and a sample of 25 each from among the vegetable vendors, washer-women and domestic maids for the study of women workers in the unorganised sectors. The size, distribution of the sample establishments by sector is given in Table 1:5 and their employment structure by sex and occupations in Table 1:6. (The characteristics of sample workers from establishments are described in the next chapter).

Table 1:5 Distribution of Sample Establishments by Activity and Employment Size

Activity	Number of Workers						Total
	5	5-10	10-20	20-50	50-100	100+	
Public Administration	-	-	-	2	1	7	10
Manufacturing (Public)	-	-	-	-	-	7	7
Manufacturing (Private)	1	1	5	7	4	2	20
Construction	-	-	-	3	-	2	5
Trade	10	15	2	1	4	1	33
Transport	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Banking and Insurance	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Education schools (Pub)	-	-	2	1	1	-	4
Education schools (Pvt)	-	3	1	3	3	1	11
Hotel	-	-	-	-	1	1	2
Theatre	-	-	1	1	-	-	2
TOTAL	11	19	11	18	14	24	97
	(11.34)	(19.57)	(11.34)	(18.54)	(14.22)	(24.72)	(100)

Table I : 6 Occupation and Sex Composition of Women Workers in Different Activities

Activity	Pub. Admini- stration	Manufactur- ing (Pub.)	Manufactur- ing (Pri.)	Construct- ion	Trade - Shop Processing	Banking and Insurance	Transport	Edu. School (Pub.)	Edu. School (Pub.)	Hotel	Theatres	TOTAL
No. of establishments in Sample	10	7	20	5	23 10	2	1	4	11	2	2	97
<b>Executive</b>												
Males	244	1040	79	8	34 43							
Females	9	7	4	-	13	284 2	126 7	- 4	6 10	50 4	6 -	1920 60
Total	253	1047	83	8	47	286	133	4	16	54	6	1930
Estab. employing women	6	2	3	-	43 9	2	1	4	9	2	-	38
<b>Secretarial</b>												
Males	1241	577	79	-	26 123	673	666	7	18	34	7	3451
Females	138	52	2	-	4	45	75	3	9	7	-	336
Total	1379	629	81	-	30	718	741	10	27	41	7	1387
Estab. employing women	10	4	2	-	124 2 1	2	1					
<b>Ministerial</b>												
Males	4248	422	95	12	139 54	319	759	12	82	188	5	6325
Females	1332	10	9	-	1	1	8	7	48	14	-	1430
Total	5580	432	94	12	139 54	320	767	19	130	202	5	7769
Estab. employing women	3	3	5	-	1	1	1	3	9	1	-	27
<b>Sales Workers</b>												
Males	-	-	-	-	36 2	-	-	-	-	-	-	38
Females	-	-	-	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
Total	-	-	-	-	46	-	-	-	-	-	-	48
Estab. employing women	-	-	-	-	2 7	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
<b>Production</b>												
Males	410	2571	379	515	5 397	-	28	-	-	-	32	4337
Females	9	67	639	98	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	815
Total	419	2638	1018	613	6	-	29	-	-	-	32	5152
Estab. employing women	2	5	5	5	398 1	-	1	-	-	-	-	19
<b>Teachers</b>												
Males	35	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	32	-	-	67
Females	67	-	-	-	-	-	-	75	261	-	-	403
Total	102	-	-	-	-	-	-	75	293	-	-	470
Estab. employing women	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	10	-	-	15
<b>Medical Workers</b>												
Males	132	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	132
Females	18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	19
Total	150	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	151
Estab. employing women	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2
<b>Total</b>												
Males	6310	4610	622	535	210 519	1276	1579	19	138	272	50	16270
Females	1573	136	654	98	27 3	48	91	89	329	25	-	3073
Total	7883	4746	1276	633	267 522	1324	1670	108	467	297	50	19343
Estab. employing women	10	5	9	5	11 3	2	1	4	10	2	-	65
Average employee women	788	678	64	127	12 62	662	1670	27	42	149	25	199
% of women workers	19.95	2.87	51.29	15.48	10.11 0.48	3.63	5.45	82.41	70.45	8.42	0	15.89
% of establishment employ- ing women	100	71.43	45.00	100	60.87 30.00	100	100	100	90.91	100	0	67.01

The 97 sample establishments had a total strength of 19343 employees, thus yielding an average employment size of 199 workers. Of the 97 establishments 65, or 67 per cent had some women employees; women constituting an overall proportion of 15.89 per cent in the workforce of sample establishments. Establishments in all categories except theatres, employed women in one or the other occupation, and in smaller or larger numbers. But every sample establishment in public administration, construction, and every government school in sample had some women employees. The sample is true of sample units in transport, banking and insurance, and hotels, but in these cases the sample number of establishments was just one or two. Other activities in which majority of the sample establishments had women employees were : public sector manufacturing, trade and private schools.

Of the private manufacturing units the majority did not have any women employees. Yet the overall percentage of women workers in this category of sample establishments worked out to 51 per cent. This is primarily because of a few units covered in the sample in food processing, embroidery and knitting were all-women establishments. The other categories of establishments with a major proportion of women in their workforce are : government schools (82%) and private schools (70%). Theatres had no women employees.

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Among the major occupational categories, women constituted 85 per cent of teachers, 21 per cent of sales workers, 18 per cent of ministerial workers, 16 per cent of production process workers, 12.50 per cent of para-medical workers, 9 per cent of secretarial and 3 per cent of the executives. The occupational categories which found employing women in most kinds of establishments included secretarial, ministerial and executive, but their proportions varied in each of them among various types of establishments. In the executive jobs, women had a fair share in trading establishments and schools; in the secretarial jobs in public administration, schools, banking and insurance, transport, and hotels, and, in ministerial jobs in public administration, and schools.

It must be noted that the sample is not necessarily representative of the employment pattern of women in the city, as despite our best efforts, the lack of cooperation on the part of several employers compelled us to adopt substitution and purposive decisions with a view to ensuring response. But since the study does not essentially aim at estimation; but on examining the characteristics of women employment and extent and processes of discrimination, the limitations of the sample would not impair the validity of our conclusions.



five per cent in the ministerial categories of peons and sweepers.

Personal Characteristics : Age, Marital Status and Education

The women workers in urban establishments are relatively young : 72 per cent of them are below 35 years of age. The very young below 20 years, however, are a smaller number (5%). Two-thirds of them are in the age group 20-35 years. The middle-aged (35-50 years) constitute 23 per cent, relatively old (over 50 years) five per cent (Table II:1).

Table II:1 Age and Marital Status of Sample Workers

Age Group	FEMALES					MALES		
	Un-married	Married	Widow	Divorced	Total	Un-married	Married	Total
20	12	2	-	-	14	4	-	4
20-35	74	92	13	3	182	12	29	41
35-50	1	45	15	1	62	2	15	17
50 Plus	1	8	6	-	15	-	3	3
TOTAL	88 (32.56)	147 (54.37)	34 (12.58)	4 (1.48)	273 (100)	18 (27.72)	47 (72.38)	65 (100)

Over half (54.37%) of the women workers were married, another 32.56% unmarried, 13 per cent were widows and 1.48 per cent divorcees. As expected, most in the age group below 20 years were unmarried, and all

*Revised*

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Age Group	FEMALES					MALES		
	Un-married	Married	Widow	Divorced	Total	Un-married	Married	Total
<20	12	2	-	-	14	4	-	4
20-35	74	92	13	3	182	12	29	41
35-50	1	45	15	1	62	2	15	17
50+	1	3	6	-	10	-	3	3
TOTAL	88 (32.56)	147 (54.37)	34 (12.53)	4 (1.48)	273 (100)	18 (27.72)	47 (72.38)	65 (100)

Over half (54.37%) of the women workers were married, another 32.56% unmarried, 13 per cent were widows and 1.48 per cent divorcees. As expected, most in the age group below 20 years were unmarried, and all

those aged 35 years or more were either married or widows, but 41 per cent of those in the age group 20-35 were also unmarried. With a mean age at marriage of 19.1 years for urban areas in India (1971), this proportion of unmarried women in the age group 20-35 looks rather high. It probably implies that entry into labour force tends to postpone marriage to <sup>a</sup>certain extent in urban areas. There does not seem to be a similar effect on male workers, of whom 72 per cent were married and of those in the age group 20-35 years, 70 per cent were married.

The women employed as regular employees in establishments seem much better educated than the average women in the city. Eightyfour per cent of our sample workers were literate, as compared to only 47 per cent of women population in the city (1981). Around 80 per cent of the sample workers had schooling at least upto secondary level and 55 per cent had gone beyond the secondary level of education. While practically all the workers in public administration, public sector manufacturing, schools, banking and insurance and transport had secondary or higher level of education but practically all women workers were illiterate in the construction sector, and private sector manufacturing had one-fourth of its women employees illiterate. Still, however, the educational levels of women workers are lower than those of <sup>the</sup> male workers. Among the men working in the establishments, the percentage of those with secondary or higher level of education is 85, and illiterates among them are only six per cent. In private manufacturing sector, for example, of the male



Table II:2 Educational Levels of Sample Workers

Establishment Categories	FEMALES					MALES				
	Illiterate	Literates - non matriculates	Matriculates but not graduates	Graduates and post-graduates	Total	Illiterate	Literates - non matriculates	Matriculates but not graduates	Graduates and post-graduates	Total
Public Administration	5	1	27	32	65		1	2	16	19
Manufacturing (Public)	-	1	10	20	31	-	1	3	7	11
Manufacturing (Private)	6	7	6	4	23	-	1	1	3	5
Construction	25	1	-	-	26	3	-	-	-	3
Trade & Commerce	3	3	6	7	22	1	3	3	5	12
Banking & Insurance	-	-	-	23	23	-	-	-	5	5
Transport & Communication	1	-	3	7	11	-	-	1	1	2
Education : School (Public)	1	1	5	8	15	-	-	1		1
Education : School (Private)	1	1	6	26	34	-	-	2	3	5
Hotel	1	-	2	3	6	-	-	-	2	2
TOTAL	43 (15.91)	15 (5.55)	65 (24.05)	150 (55.50)	273 (100)	4 (1.5.91)	6 (9.24)	13 (20.02)	42 (64.68)	65 (100)

workers 80 per cent had secondary or higher education and none was illiterate, of the women workers 43 per cent were with secondary or higher education, but 26 per cent were illiterate.

This difference in educational attainment of the male and female workers is reflected to a certain extent in their respective occupational placement. Thus while of the male workers around 15 per cent were in executive and supervisory jobs, of the female workers the corresponding percentage was only seven (Table II:3). In the next category of relatively higher grade jobs of upper grade clerks, stenographers and personnel assistants, there were only 12 per cent of women workers, while of the male workers 24 per cent were in these jobs. The lower grade clerical position, on the other hand, absorbed 21 per cent of men and 27 per cent of women workers. Similarly, unskilled production process jobs absorbed 10.50 per cent of women workers but only 7.5 per cent of male workers.

#### Family Size and Dependency

It is expected that urban women workers generally would be a part of the families living in urban areas while among male workers a sizeable proportion could be migrants. This difference may also lead to a larger sized family of an average women worker than of a male worker. In the present case we find that the migrants constitute 42 per cent of the women and 62 per cent of the male workers. Of the migrants in either case, most had some other urban area as the

Table 11:3 Conventionwise Distribution of Sample Workers

Occupational Category	Executive	Supervisory	Stenographers	Upper Grade Assistants	Lower Grade Assistants/clerk	Cashier/sales woman	Telephone operators	Peons	Hotel boys, maids waiters	Binders and packers	Other skilled workers	Unskilled worker	Researchers	Para-medical staff	TOTAL
Public Administration	1	5	10	12	39	-	2	4	-	-	1	-	7	4	85
Manufacturing (Public)	-	4	3	1	8	3	1	-	-	-	11	1	-	-	32
Manufacturing (Private)	-	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	6	6	-	-	20
Trade & Commerce	3	2	1	-	1	12	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	21
Education School (Public)	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	11	-	14
Education School (Private)	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	31	-	35
Bank & Insurance	-	1	1	-	18	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	23
Transport & Communication	1	-	1	-	8	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	11
Construction	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	26	-	-	26
Hotel	-	1	-	-	-	2	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	6
Theatre	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	5	18	17	14	75	20	5	8	2	4	18	34	49	4	273
	(1.83)	(6.59)	(6.23)	(5.13)	(27.47)	(7.33)	(1.83)	(2.93)	(0.73)	(1.46)	(6.59)	(12.46)	(17.94)	(1.46)	(100)

place of their origin, but the percentage of such workers among women migrants was 90, while among male migrant workers it was 80. The women workers with rural origin constituted only 14 per cent of the sample workers, and most of them were employed in construction activity.

The average size of a woman worker's family is 5.11 (Table II:4). Most families are in the range of 3 to 6 members, 23 per cent of them have families of seven or more members and seven per cent, two members. One per cent families are single member ones. On an average, a family has 2.26 earners, including the woman worker who is our respondent. The number of earners increases with the size of the family, but only marginally. Thus while one-member families have obviously one earner, two member families as often as not have two earners. Three-member families on an average have two earners, but four, five and six member families have between 2 and 2.67 earners. Thus the population per earner increases sharply with rise in family size. Family with two or three members have an average of half a dependent per earner, those with 4, 5 and 6 have one dependent per earner and the larger families have two dependents per earner. Overall population per earner in the women workers' families consists of 2.26 persons.

The population-earner ratio in the families of the male workers in our control sample, on the other hand, is higher at 2.74. The family size in their case works out to 4.64 persons. The small



Table II:4 Family Size, Earners and Income

Female : (Average family size - 5.11)

Family size	No. of families	Total No. of earners	Average earner per family	Dependency ratio	Average household income per month
	3	3	1	1	644.33
	29	44	1.52	1.21	1169.38
	44	84	1.91	1.57	1146.23
	54	109	2.02	1.88	1520.05
	61	97	2.37	2.11	1545.93
	39	104	2.67	2.13	1826.95
	26	62	2.38	2.94	1462.92
	17	52	3.06	2.62	2121.06
plus	20	63	3.15	2.74	1813.20
TOTAL	273	613	2.25	2.25	1513.89

Male : (Average family size - 4.09)

	1	1	1	1	1625.00
	3	6	2	1	618.33
	12	18	1.50	2	1372.25
	17	26	1.53	2.62	1121.56
	9	17	1.89	2.65	1462.86
	8	14	1.75	3.43	1212.00
	10	19	1.90	3.68	1728.44
	1	1	1	8	954.00
plus	4	14	3.50	2.27	2374.00
TOTAL	68	116	1.78	2.74	1378.62

families, one or two members constitute six per cent, and large families with seven or more members 23 per cent. Thus size structure of the families is similar in case of the men and women workers. But the three and four member families together make 45 per cent of the families of the male workers, while such families make only 36 per cent in the case of women workers. Families with 5-6 members make 26 per cent in the case of former and 30 per cent in the case of latter. That makes for somewhat larger family size in the case of families of female workers. The population per earner rises much sharply in the case of the families of the male workers than of the female workers. The average number of earners per family in the case of male workers is 1.78 as against 2.26 in the women workers' families; and even with a somewhat smaller family size, the average dependency in the case of the former is higher.

Higher earner-population ratio and lower dependency ratio in the case of the families of women workers, render a somewhat better economic status to their families as compared to those of the male workers. The average household income of a female worker's family works out to Rs.1514 per month and in case of a male worker Rs.1379 per month. In terms of per capita income the difference, however, is only marginal : Rs.296 per month for households of female workers and Rs.282 for those of the male workers. Thus it looks that the labour supply to the urban wage-alary market does not show any differential pattern by sex insofar as the economic conditions of the household is concerned : the female

workers came from the similar income groups as the male workers. Yet the relative figures of earners per family and dependency ratios in the case of male and female workers' households suggest that the women workers' households have a higher participation rate and lower earnings per worker. The households of female workers have half an earner more than those of the male workers, and half a dependent less than the latter. Yet the per capita income in the two cases is almost the same. To a certain extent this phenomenon suggests that in households with low earning per earner, women participate in economic activity more often than in those with their earning members engaged in higher earning jobs, in order to maintain a given level of income, and women workers also earn less so that a high level of participation in their households does not necessarily lead to the proportionate rise in household income levels.

### Job History

#### (a) Age and Education at Entry into Labour Market

That the women workers many a time seek work as a matter of economic compulsions of the family is evidenced by the pattern of age and educational qualifications of the women workers at the time they start looking for a job. First, 11 per cent of them had started searching for jobs before they attained the age of 17 years, 40 per cent by the age of 20 years. Second, 17 per cent of them had no education when they first started search for a job, 43 per cent could not go beyond secondary school education before they started.

Table II:5 Educational Qualifications at Starting Job Search

## FEMALE

Age at starting job search (Years)	No Schooling	Primary	Secondary	1st Degree	Higher	Total
< 15	1	2	6	-	-	9
15-17	2	-	17	3	-	22
17-20	7	-	40	18	13	78
20-23	6	1	16	18	27	68
23-26	12	1	12	5	12	42
26 plus	19	4	20	3	8	54
TOTAL	47	8	111	47	60	273

## MALE

< 15	-	3	-	-	-	3
15-17	-	1	14	11	2	28
17-20	-	-	-	1	-	1
20-23	-	1	5	10	5	21
23-26	-	1	-	2	1	4
26 plus	4	1	1	1	1	8
TOTAL	4	7	20	25	9	65



looking for jobs. Only 29 per cent completed at least their first degree education before looking for jobs. On the other hand, of the male workers, 52 per cent started looking for jobs after completing at least their first degree education. Only six per cent of male workers started looking for jobs before the age of 17 years, though 38 per cent had started job search by the time they were 20 years old.

The striking differences in the educational levels of the male and female workers at the time they entered the job market are to be found mainly at the lowest and the highest ends of the educational scale. First, the number of women workers starting job search without any education is significantly large which is not so in the case of male workers. It may also be noted that most of the women in this category started job search rather late, after about 25 years of age. Second, the number of women workers starting job after completing education beyond first degree is also proportionately quite high (22%) as compared to males (14%). Thus of the female workers a sizeable proportion consists, on the one hand, of women who came from such groups of households which could not afford education for them and were desperate in terms of employment for them to supplement family income; and, on the other, of women whose households could afford highest education for them and could have done without their going to work, but having received higher education they preferred to work. For the first category of women workers it is an economic compulsion to work, while for the latter it is a

matter of gaining a status and independence. Majority of women workers, of course, started searching for work after completing secondary or first degree education, but the proportion of those with little or no education and of those with higher than first degree education before starting job search was found higher among the female workers than among the male workers.

(b) Number and Types of Job Tried and Selection-attempts Ratios

Majority of the women workers in our sample (68%) tried for only one job, that is, the present one. But 18 per cent tried one job each earlier, nine per cent tried two jobs. In all the 87 of the women workers in our sample tried for 141 jobs, earlier than the present job. The largest number of attempts (33 per cent) were made for the job of lower grade assistant and clerk, followed by that of a teacher (21%). Other jobs with sizeable frequency of attempts by women workers were in the executive and supervisory (13%), salesworker (11%), stenographers (10%), and production process workers, skilled and unskilled (7%). The pattern revealed by the information relating to the male workers in our control sample is somewhat different. While lower grade assistants and clerks make up one-third of jobs attempted in their case too, the next largest category of jobs tried by male workers is executive and supervisory (25%), followed by stenographers (12%) and production process workers, skilled and unskilled (10 and 6 per cent each).

Table II : 6 Earlier Jobs Tried

Job Category	No. of Workers	Frequency of attempts	Number of Selections	Selection- attempts ratio
<u>FEMALE</u>				
Executive and Supervisory	11	19	17	0.89
Stenographers	9	14	7	0.50
Upper Grade Assistant	1	1	1	1.00
Lower Grade Assistant/Clerk	29	46	7	0.15
Sales Worker	6	15	5	0.33
Skilled Production Worker	3	5	4	0.80
Unskilled Production Worker	3	5	4	0.80
Teachers	20	29	17	0.65
Others	5	7	4	0.57
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>87</u></b>	<b><u>141</u></b>	<b><u>66</u></b>	<b><u>0.46</u></b>
<u>MALE</u>				
Executive and Supervisory	6	13	12	0.92
Stenographers	5	8	3	0.38
Upper Grade Assistant	2	2	1	0.50
Lower Grade Assistant/Clerk	9	21	3	0.14
Sales Worker	2	5	5	1.00
Skilled Production Worker	1	1	1	1.00
Unskilled Production Worker	2	6	4	0.66
Teachers	3	4	3	0.75
Others	4	4	4	1.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>34</u></b>	<b><u>64</u></b>	<b><u>36</u></b>	<b><u>0.56</u></b>

In terms of the selection in the jobs tried for, men did somewhat better than women : for men the selection-attempts ratio worked out to 0.56 and for women 0.46. In executive and supervisory jobs, and lower grade clerical assistants positions, men and women had equal chances of getting selected.

In stenographers and upper grade assistants positions women scored over men, but in all other categories men had a better chance than women in securing jobs tried for.

(c) Past Jobs Done

In all, about one-third of the women workers had done some job before the present one. All but three per cent, had, however, done only one job before. Among the male workers those having done some job before constituted about 51 per cent, all but 12 per cent having done only one job earlier.

What kind of jobs have the women workers done earlier? Were they similar or different from the present one? Occupational mobility seems limited in as much as over two-thirds of the women workers having job experience before entering the present job, had worked in the jobs similar to the present one (Table II:7). Practically all those who are working as saleswomen, stenographers, production process workers and teachers, had the experience, if at all, in similar jobs. On the other hand, most of those who are working as lower grade clerks, and in supervisory and executive categories, had experience in different jobs, probably lower jobs in the same line.

Most (65%) women having done some job earlier, however, had worked in earlier jobs for less than two years only. Twenty-three per cent had work experience of between two and three years and the rest (13%) for over three years. Of the male workers with previous experience



Table II:7 Pattern of Jobs Done Earlier Than the Present One  
(Female Workers)

Present Occupation	No. of workers with no earl- ier job	Earlier Jobs*		Total No. of work- ers in the sample
		Similar to present	Different	
Executive	3	-	2	5
Supervisory	13	-	5	18
Stenographers	12	3	2	17
Upper Grade Assistants	7	5	2	14
Lower Grade Assistants	58	7	11	75
Salesworkers	15	4	1	20
Telephone Operators	2	1	2	5
Peons	7	-	1	8
Hotel workers	1	-	1	2
Binders and Packers	4	-	-	4
Skilled Production Process workers	15	3	-	18
Unskilled Production Process workers	12	21	1	34
Teachers	34	16	2	49
Para-medical workers	3	1	-	4
TOTAL	187	61	30	273

\* Number of earlier jobs, similar and different sometimes exceed the number of workers who have done jobs earlier due to some workers having done more than one job (see, Lower Grade Assistants and teachers).

also a similar pattern of length of experience was found. But so far as the reasons for giving up the earlier job are concerned, a difference is noticed between the female and male workers. It is found that, while most of the male workers gave up the earlier job for job-related reasons, women workers quite often left jobs for personal reasons. Of the male workers 57 per cent left job for a better job, 21 per cent because the earlier job was temporary and the present job permanent, and others due to retirement, or closure of the establishment. Of the women workers only 37 per cent gave up earlier job in favour of better or permanent jobs; one fourth of them left due to reasons of distance to place of work, household work, transfer of father/husband and marriage. A sizeable proportion of them, 23 per cent, had to discontinue as the establishments where they were working were closed closed down, which implies that a large percentage of women work in jobs of intermittent rather than perennial nature.

Not many women workers, however, had a long gap between the jobs. Those leaving earlier jobs for household reasons of family responsibility or marriage constituted only 15 per cent and they discontinued work for a period of two to five years. Others who discontinued work mostly for shorter periods of upto two years, continued job search, but could not get opportunities. Of the male workers also, 12 per cent had a period of unemployment between jobs of upto two years, and the workers affected were thrown out of their jobs because of the closure of establishment or because of their union activities.

### Women Workers' Reactions to the Situation and Basis of Discrimination

What do the women workers think about the prevalence of various forms of discrimination and the alleged explanations of sex discrimination? We asked them two sets of questions: one, relating to the various propositions on the prevalence of discrimination and other relating to the commonly advanced reasons for preference of men over women as employees. The reactions and opinions given by our respondents may be biased to the extent that the sample is confined only to those who have been able to secure a job and are currently working. But still we think that they reveal the trend in women's own feelings on the issues.

The three propositions relating to prevalence of discrimination on which the respondents were asked to give an affirmative or negative answer were : (i) It is easier for men than for women to get a job; (ii) women are generally employed in jobs with lower earnings and lower prospects and (iii) women are paid lower wages than men. The responses reveal that only a minority of women workers feel that there prevails discrimination, pre-entry or post-entry. Only 31 per cent of them agreed with the proposition that it is easier for men than for women to get a job. Majority of illiterate respondents, however, responded in conformity with the proposition. Similarly, 60 per cent of the respondents felt that women are not necessarily employed in low-earning low-status job only. There again majority of the

illiterate respondents felt otherwise. The same pattern was revealed by the responses on the third proposition, relating to the lower wages to women than men. Thus it looks, on the whole, the majority of women do not find the recruitment and placement practices of employers discriminatory to them. The illiterate group of women workers, however, do feel that discrimination exists. It is also noticed that a large proportion, though not majority, of women workers with the university education also felt that way.

The next set of questions that we asked the women workers was to assess how far do they consider the various reasons given by employers for not employing women or employing them only in the low-earning low-status jobs, justified. Strangely enough, the rebuttal of the employers' arguments was not very strong. No doubt, majority of the respondents denied that women were less efficient and less committed to work than men, they also denied that women are paid lower wages due to lower productivity or they create problems for management. But majority of them agreed that women abstain more often than men from work and that they have a higher turnover than men. Surprisingly, majority of them also thought that women are suitable only for low paid jobs, and that they are available for work on lower wages than men. Even in cases of propositions which were denied by majority, still a substantial percentage of respondents tended to justify the bases for discrimination. For example, 43 per cent of them thought women were less efficient, 45 per cent thought they are less committed to work, 38 per cent tended to justify lower

Inter-branch view



Table II:8 Reactions to Sex Discrimination Issues

Educational Level	Responses to Propositions					
	1		2		3	
	Yes.	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Illiterate	28	18	30	13	30	16
Primary	2	18	3	25	3	5
Secondary	13	46	13	35	10	49
First Degree	23	47	28	48	30	53
Higher	18	54	33	36	25	48

Propositions

1. It is easier for men than for women to get a job.
2. Women are generally employed in jobs with lower earnings than men.
3. Women are paid lower wages than men.

Table II: 9 Reactions to Bases for Discrimination

Educational level	Reasons*															
	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Illiterate	20	16	12	22	31	6	25	10	14	21	23	17	12	19	33	1
Primary	1	3	3	1	4	3	4	2	2	2	2	2	3	1	5	
Secondary	12	16	12	13	21	9	13	13	7	20	13	17	8	15	17	4
First Degree	13	26	20	19	23	17	15	18	10	24	15	20	11	24	23	10
Higher	19	24	23	30	26	16	22	13	12	20	21	15	11	24	31	8

Reasons for DiscriminationJob Discrimination

1. Women are less efficient
2. Women are less committed to career
3. Women abstain from work more often
4. Women leave jobs more often
5. Women are a nuisance for management

Wage Discrimination

6. Women are suitable for low-paid jobs only
7. Women are paid lower due to lower productivity
8. Women are available for work at lower wages

wages for women on the basis of low productivity. Thirty four per cent even thought that women were a 'nuisance' at the workplace and create problems for management.

It is difficult to find out whether these responses represent factual situation, or the employed women's attitude towards the rest of them, or the degree of brainwashing the centuries of social attitudes and traditions have produced. After all, these respondents are the ones who have succeeded in securing jobs, and therefore, their own assessment of the difficulties in getting jobs would be different from the ones who have failed to secure employment. Similarly, their assessment of job placement and earnings seem more or less in line with the jobs in which they are placed. Illiterate women workers are generally in low-paid jobs, and also in such jobs where women received lower wages than men, while better educated women are not necessarily in low paid jobs and work in the organised sector where no difference in wages exists between men and women. So, most illiterate and semi-literate, and those with little education find the market discriminatory while most better educated do not feel that job or wage discrimination exists. So far as bases of discrimination given by employers are concerned the differential pattern by educational levels of workers is significant: the illiterates more often consider these bases justified than the educated. Women workers, however, agreed irrespective of their levels of education that low wages to women are not due to their lower productivity, but they are available for work at lower wages than men.

Segregation  $\rightarrow$  opportunity job wage  
 $\rightarrow$  H.S.

### Chapter III : Sex Segregation in Employment

Segregation in the labour market is a function not only of the inherent and presumed suitability of certain groups of workers to particular jobs, but also of the demand and supply conditions in the labour market. A job considered suitable for males only may also employ women if adequate number of men are not available to work on it; and employers might employ men in jobs considered good for women only, if not enough women supply their labour. Further, an occupation may have predominance of women not because they do the job better than men, or men are not available, but because women, with similar productivity as men, are available to work at lower wage rates. In the situation of overall low proportion of women in the labour force, likelihood of the number of jobs being predominantly and exclusively female occupations, is not very high. On the other hand, the few women that work are spread over a large number of occupations, thus preventing a complete segregation of occupations by labour market. There could, however, be segregation on some other bases, size and ownership of the employer establishments and nature of activities, which may prohibit the entry of women in certain types of activities and organisations.

#### Occupational Segregation in Employment Structure

Given the fact that the women constituted only 9.68 per cent of the workers (1981 Census) in the city of Lucknow, it is obvious that most occupations have an overwhelming predominance of male

workers. In the 100-fold two-digit level classification of occupations, all except one occupation (08 : Nursing and other Medical and Health Technicians), have men in the majority (Table III:1). A number of occupations, such as aircraft and ship officers, economists, sculptors, painters and photographers, working partners, directors, and managers in trade, as well as in financial institutions, transport, communication and storage and other services, village officials, computing machine operators, transport conductors and guards, mail distributors, manufacturers' agents, housekeepers, matrons and stewards in hostels, paper makers, tanners, plumbers and welders, rubber and plastic product makers, painters, and stationery equipment operators, had exclusively male workforce. Obviously, in some of these cases, there does not seem any basic reason either of physical strength or even of preferences of workers, as to why women could not be in employment. The main reason probably lies in the fact of a very small number of women workers in general and of women workers with the requisite skills in particular.

As noted earlier, in a situation of overwhelming predominance of male workers, it is difficult to find exclusively female occupations. Yet, a few occupations are found to have a significantly large proportion of women workers. The case of nursing and related occupations has been cited earlier, which have 59 per cent female workforce. Taking nurses as such the percentage is 68 and, of course,



Table III : Occupational Classification of Persons at Work, by Sex

Lucknow City, 1971

Division & Group Code	Occupation	Total	Male	Female	%
ALL		221305	203704	12662	5.54
0-1	Professional, Technical and Related Workers	20005	15465	4540	22.69
001	Physical scientists	220	210	10	4.55
01	Physical science technicians	271	261	10	3.69
02	Architects, Engineers, Technologists and Surveyors	1093	1088	5	0.46
03	Engineering Technicians	2175	2160	15	0.68
04	Aircraft and ship officers	70	70	0	0.00
05	Life scientists	110	95	15	13.64
06	Life Science technicians	85	75	10	11.76
07	Physicians and Surgeons	2077	1981	96	4.62
08	Nursing and other Medical and Health Technicians	1357	561	796	58.66
09	Other scientific, medical and technical persons	276	261	15	5.43
10	Mathematicians and Statisticians	165	160	5	3.03
11	Economists and related workers	25	25	0	0.00
12	Accountants and Auditors	1462	1457	5	0.34
13	Social Scientists and Related Workers	300	230	70	23.33
14	Jurists	941	926	15	1.59
15	Teachers	7346	4045	3301	44.34
16	Poets, authors, journalists	250	220	30	12.00
17	Sculptors, Painters, Photographers	346	346	0	0.00
18	Composers and Performing artists	487	391	96	19.71
19	Other professorial workers	949	903	46	4.85

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>%</u>
2 <u>Administrative, Executive and Managerial Workers</u>	2576	2496	80	3.11
20 Elective and Legislative Officials	140	120	20	14.29
21 Administrative and Executive Officials, Government	797	762	35	4.39
22 Working Proprietors, Directors, Managers, Trade	96	96	0	0.00
23 Directors and Managers - Financial Institutes	221	221	0	0.00
24 Working Partners, Directors, Managers - Manufacturing	301	296	5	1.66
25 Working Partners, Directors, Managers - Transport, Storage and Commerce	90	90	0	0.00
26 Working Partners, Directors, Managers - Other Services	40	40	0	0.00
29 Other Administrative, Executive and Managerial Workers	30	30	0	0.00
3 <u>Clerical and Related Workers</u>	42560	41727	923	2.16
30 Clerical and Other Supervisors	3734	3674	60	1.61
31 Village Officials	135	135	0	0.00
32 Steno, Typists, Card and Punch Operators	2766	2480	286	10.34
33 Book-keepers, Cashiers, Related Workers	2871	2831	40	1.39
34 Computing Machine Operators	210	210	0	0.00
35 Clerical and Related Workers	29739	29400	339	1.31
36 Transport and Communication Supervisors	1007	1002	5	0.50
37 Transport Conductors and Guards	657	657	0	0.00
38 Mail Distributors and Related Workers	932	932	0	0.00
39 Telephone and Telegraph Operators	649	506	143	22.03
4 <u>Sales Workers</u>	32584	31748	835	2.56
40 Merchants and Shopkeepers	26285	25561	724	2.75
41 Manufacturers' Agents	165	165	0	0.00
42 Technical Salesmen and Commercial Travellers	141	141	0	0.00
43 Salesmen, Shop Assistant and Related Workers	5190	5102	88	1.05
44 Insurance, Real Estate Workers	417	407	10	2.40
45 Moneylenders and Pawn Brokers	367	362	5	1.36
49 Other Sales Workers	10	10	0	0.00

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>%</u>
5 <u>Service Workers</u>	<u>28603</u>	<u>24928</u>	<u>3675</u>	<u>12.85</u>
50 Hotel and Restaurant Keepers	684	648	36	5.26
51 Housekeepers, Matrons, Stewards	165	165	0	0.00
52 Cooks and Waiters	3577	3141	436	12.19
53 Maids and Related Housekeeping Workers	4751	3411	1340	28.20
54 Building Caretakers, Sweepers, Cleaners	6226	4830	1396	21.94
55 Laundrymen, Dry Cleaners and Pressers	3216	2810	406	12.62
56 Hairdressers, Barbers, Beauticians	1737	1747	20	1.13
57 Protective Service Workers	8062	7991	71	0.88
59 Other Service Workers	155	155	0	0.00
6 <u>Farmers, Fishermen, Hunters</u>	<u>2557</u>	<u>2455</u>	<u>102</u>	<u>3.99</u>
7. 8				
9 <u>Production and Related Workers</u>	<u>85986</u>	<u>83570</u>	<u>2416</u>	<u>2.81</u>
71 Miners, Quarrymen, Drillers	173	173	5	2.81
72 Metal Processors	250	245	5	2.00
73 Wood Preparation and Paper Makers	657	657	0	0.00
74 Chemical Processors and Related Workers	306	296	10	3.27
75 Spinners, Weavers, Knitters, Dryers	566	531	35	6.18
76 Tanners, Feltmongers, Pelt Dressers	35	35	0	0.00
77 Food and Beverage Processors	4735	4635	100	2.11
78 Tobacco Preparers, Tobacco Product Makers	225	215	10	4.44
79 Tailors, Dressmakers, Upholsterers	11819	10963	856	7.24
80 Shoe and Leather Goods Makers	3118	3103	15	0.48
81 Carpenters and Related Wood Workers	4503	4423	15	0.33
82 Stone Cutters and Carvers	95	90	5	5.26
83 Blacksmiths, Tool Makers, Machine Tool Operators	3537	3492	45	1.27
84 Machinery fitters, assemblers and Precision Instrument Workers	9333	9313	20	0.21
86 Electrical Fitters and Electrical Workers	2848	2833	15	0.53

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>%</u>
87 Plumbers, Welders etc.	1158	1158	0	0.00
88 Jewellery and Precision Metal Workers	1984	1979	5	0.25
89 Glass Formers, Potters etc.	1008	918	90	8.93
90 Rubber and Plastic Product Makers	165	165	0	0.00
91 Paper and Paper Board Product Makers	381	366	15	3.94
92 Printing and Related Workers	3417	3397	20	0.59
93 Painters	1249	1249	0	0.00
94 Other Production and Related Workers	1114	994	120	10.77
95 Bricklayers and Other Construction Workers	2539	2574	15	0.58
96 Stationery Equipment Operators	646	646	0	0.00
97 Material Handling Equipment Operators	1568	1533	35	2.23
98 Transport Equipment Operators	14040	13772	268	1.91
99 Labourers	14427	13715	712	4.94
100 Worker Not Classified Above	<u>6406</u>	<u>6315</u>	<u>91</u>	<u>1.42</u>
				<sup>5</sup> 6

all midwives and health visitors are women. The next occupation with high proportion of women is teaching. Thirty-four per cent of teachers were women. Their percentage was higher at 49 per cent among the primary and middle school teachers, and 37 among secondary school teachers but only seven per cent among the university and college teachers. Social scientists and other workers (family welfare etc.,) telephone operators, maids and sweepers and cleaners are other occupations which have quite high (20-25 per cent) proportion of women, followed by life scientists and technicians, poets, authors and journalists, composers and performing artists, elective and legislative officials, stenographers and typists, cooks and waiters, launderers and pressers, potters, basketry weavers, and spinners, weavers and knitters.

A high proportion of women workers in the above occupations does not necessarily suggest that they are specifically women occupations. Yet a significantly higher than average proportion of women in these occupations leads to a hypothesis that they have some distinct characteristics which tends to make their labour market specially favourable to women. In the broad classification of activities and occupations of the establishments and their workers in our sample (Table III:2), such characteristics seem emerging in the case of secretarial jobs in public administration, ministerial jobs in municipal administration, some production process job (primarily embroidery and food processing) in private sector manufacturing, and construction, executive, secretarial and sales jobs in trading establishments, all kinds of jobs in schools, and, secretarial jobs in hotels, each of these categories having higher than average proportion of women workers.



Table III : 2 Percentage of Establishments Employing Women Workers and Percentage of Women Workers by Activity and Major Occupation (Sample Establishment)

Occupational Group	Executive		Secretarial		Ministerial		Sales Workers		Production Workers	
	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W
Activity										
1. Public Administration	60	3.56	100	10.00	30	23.87	-	-	20	62.67
2. Manufacturing (Pub. Sector)	29	2.83	58	9.27	43	2.31	-	-	71	2.59
3. Manufacturing (Pri. Sector)	15	4.82	10	2.47	25	9.57	-	-	25	62.77
4. Construction	0	0	-	-	0	0	-	-	100	15.99
5. Trade Shops	39	27.66	9	13.33	0	0	30	21.79	0	0
Commercial Establishments	0	0	10	0.81	10	1.82	0	0	10	0.25
6. Banking and Insurance	100	0.70	100	6.27	50	0.31	-	-	-	-
7. Transport (Public)	100	5.26	100	10.12	100	1.04	-	-	100	3.45
8. Government Schools	100	100	25	30.00	30	36.84	-	-	-	-
9. Private Schools	81	62.50	45	33.33	81	36.92	-	-	-	-
10. Hotels	100	7.41	100	17.07	50	6.93	-	-	-	-
11. Theatres	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
TOTAL	39 (39)	3.03	30 (33)	8.87	28 (28)	18.41	7 (21.21)	20.83	20 (39.58)	15.8

Figures in parenthesis show percentage of establishments employing women to establishments the occupation concerned, while those above them show percentage of the former to total

Occupation-wise distribution of recruitment made during the last two years by the sample establishments also suggest a tendency towards segregation in some cases. Practically all the new teachers, and one-fourth of the clerks and typists, recruited were women, while practically all the new workers in executive jobs, skilled production jobs and in hotels were males. Segregation seems more obvious in the higher grade jobs in the same line as is revealed by pattern of promotions, substantial number of workers received promotions in the executive and supervisory and skilled production jobs, but hardly any female was among them. (Details of recruitment are discussed in the next chapter).

Our sample, however, somewhat over-represents the establishments employing women : 67 per cent of the establishments in our sample employ women, and women workers constitute 16 per cent of the work-force of the sample establishments. It may not therefore provide a very reliable basis for estimation of proportions in the universe. But it is certainly indicative of general tendencies.

#### Employers' Perception and Sex Segregation in Employment

One of the important indicators of such tendencies is reflected in the employers' own perception of the suitability or otherwise of women workers. In most cases, the employers feel that the various jobs in their establishments can be performed equally well by men as women. (Table III:3). In such cases no segregation should usually

## Chapter II : Women Employees : Characteristics and Job History

### The Sample

In this chapter we describe the characteristics of women workers on the basis of the sample of 273 women employees drawn from the establishments in the various sectors of the city's economy as described in the previous chapter. The main aspects dealt with relate to their demographic and educational characteristics, family background, and job history. Some inferences on the question of discrimination are also drawn on the basis of experience of job search and reactions of the women employees as well as their comparison with the 'control' sample of 65 male employees.

Distribution of sample workers among different divisions of activities is already indicated in Table I:4. The largest segment (31%) of the sample of women workers was from the public administration establishments, followed by schools (18%), public sector manufacturing (11%), construction (9%), private sector manufacturing (8%), and trade and commerce (6%). Occupation-wise the largest proportion (27.47%) consisted of lower grade clerks and typists, followed by teachers (17.95%), and unskilled workers in manufacturing (10.4%). Sales workers and various categories of skilled production process workers constituted seven per cent each; and, those in supervisory categories, stenographers, higher grade clerks and assistants, five per cent each. Around two per cent of the women workers were in the category of executives, and

be expected and one would expect a proportion of women workers around the average in the total. But, in quite a few cases, the employers feel that job can be done by women better than men; or worse than men or not at all. In the last case women employment could not be expected, in the first case only women could be expected in jobs unless they fall short of total positions, and in the second only men would work, unless there are not enough men to offer themselves for work.

On this basis secretarial jobs in most activities have no element of segregation. In all sectors, the employers feel that these jobs could be performed equally well by men or women. In fact, a substantial number of employers (15%) felt that these jobs can be done better by women, though an equal percentage also felt the contrary and nine per cent also felt that women cannot do these jobs at all in their establishments. In total, the position seems evenly balanced in favour of men and women. Yet the percentage of women workers in this category is only nine as compared to 16 in the sample as a whole.

Most employers in manufacturing, both public and private, transport and theatres feel that women cannot perform executive and supervisory jobs at all or at least as well as the men, while those in other activities feel that the jobs can be done equally well by men and women. The overall percentage of employment of women in these categories is lower than the average, at three per cent. By and large, the jobs in this category are likely to be virtually exclusive preserves



of males except in schools and to some extent in trading establishments. Almost similar situation is noticed in the case of ministerial jobs, except in the municipal administration and schools where segregation in favour of women seems likely. Employing only male workers seems likely for sales jobs also, though some employers feel that women can do these jobs equally well or even better than men, probably at counters only. This category has 15 per cent women workers, as compared to the overall percentage of 16. No strong tendency towards segregation is thus visible for the group as a whole.

of  
At a more disaggregated level, occupational categories, it is likely that women do not get entry in many occupations as most employers felt that they either cannot do the job at all or can do it only less efficiently than men. The production process jobs, seem to have the strongest likelihood of being exclusive preserves of men as most employers felt that women cannot perform such jobs in their establishments. Yet in the private manufacturing sector over one-third of the employers felt that women can do the jobs not only equally well, but in some cases better than men. In the latter category are the establishments engaged in knitting, embroidery, tailoring and food processing, which employ women mostly exclusively. That is why despite the majority of employers declaring women unsuitable, almost two-thirds of production process workers employed by private manufacturing establishments are women. Overall, again there is no likelihood of segregation of labour market for production process workers as a whole, the proportion of women amongst them is the same as in total workforce in the sample. But a strong tendency of segregation, in some cases in favour of women and in others in favour of men is evident, when we go into the more disaggregated classification of occupations.



The tendency of segregation, it may be noted, is more easily observed when we look at an occupational category in each of the different kinds of establishments separately rather than in aggregate including all categories of establishments. While the occupational category of 'production process workers', on the whole shows no tendency towards segregation, though women constitute only a small proportion of total employment, the situation is found to be different when we consider different kinds of manufacturing establishments and individual occupations. Thus in electronics units, engineering and executive and supervisory jobs are exclusively male jobs, but virtually all the shop-floor technicians are women. In garments knitting and embroidery, again all skilled workers are women, and so is the situation regarding unskilled workers in certain food processing (Papad) units. Stenography has a tendency to be an exclusively female occupation in public sector electronics and chemical units, but not in other categories of manufacturing units.

Thus the tendency towards occupational segregation differs not only among occupations, but also in the same occupation in different kinds of establishments. As seen earlier, employers in different kinds of establishments also have varying perception about the suitability of men or women for similar kinds of jobs. Thus it is not necessarily the technology of production and potential productivity, but mainly the employers' own perception based on

tradition of the activity and the production unit, that seems to determine whether an occupation will be exclusively male, exclusively female, or mixed.

#### Reasons for Preferences by Sex

What are the reasons advanced by the employers for suitability or otherwise of women for certain jobs? The responses (323) on various degrees of suitability of women for different jobs were distributed in the following manner : Women more suitable than men, 10 per cent; women as much suitable as men, 45 per cent; women less suitable than men, 18 per cent; and women not at all suitable, 28 per cent. Let us first take the reasons given by employers for complete unsuitability of women for certain jobs. Women are considered completely unsuitable by the following proportion of respondent employers for different occupational categories : for production process jobs by 50 per cent, for executive and supervisory jobs by 30 per cent, for secretarial jobs by nine per cent, for ministerial jobs by eight per cent and for sales jobs by two per cent. No employer considered women unsuitable for teaching jobs. It may also be noted that no employer establishments considered women completely unsuitable for any of their jobs, in public administration, public sector banking and insurance and government schools. Most responses of non-suitability were concentrated in trade and commerce and private sector manufacturing.

The single most important reason given by them is that women lack physical strength required for certain jobs (Table III:4). This

Table III:4 Unguitability of Women For Certain Jobs

Occupational Group	Reasons (No. of responses)					Total	Frequency of response 'women cannot perform the jobs at all'
	1	2	3	4	5		
Public Administration						0	0
Manufacturing (Public)	4	2	1	1	-	8	7
Manufacturing (Private)	13	7	1	8	2	31	31
Construction	5	3	3	2	1	14	5
Trade and Commerce	19	10	7	5	9	50	37
Banking & Insurance (Public)	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Transport & Communication (Public)	-	-	1	1	-	2	1
Education: Schools (Public)	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Education: Schools (Private)	2	-	1	-	1	4	1
Hotels	1	-	-	-	-	1	3
Theatres	-	-	-	1	1	2	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>89</b>

- Reasons:
1. Lack of Physical Strength
  2. Lack of necessary skills required for the job
  3. Lack of psychological attitude to perform task
  4. Regularity of hours and attendance not as good as in men
  5. Any other: attitude of male employees, outgoing jobs etc.

reason was given by 45 per cent of the employers. Another one-fifth of the employers felt that women lack the necessary skills required for performing the jobs held unsuitable for women by them. A similar proportion also thought that women do not keep regular hours of work and attendance required for the jobs. A few also felt that women lack the necessary psychological attitude to perform certain jobs and that since jobs have all along been performed by men, infusing some women into them would create problems due to the attitude of male employees in these jobs. While in private and public manufacturing, trade and construction, lack of physical strength and of necessary skills are found to be the most often mentioned reasons for unsuitability of women in certain jobs; non-regularity of hours of work and attendance was mentioned as the reason mostly in private sector manufacturing and trading establishments. Trading establishments, of course, found all the five reasons significant for holding women unsuitable for certain jobs. They and to some extent, private manufacturing establishments, also found the attitude of other workers in the traditionally male dominated jobs, as a reason for non-suitability of women for these jobs. About 16 per cent of the sample establishments, most of them in trade and construction found women unsuitable for the reason of low productivity.

Lower productivity of women workers is also not found to be the major reason advanced by the employer establishments for preferring

male workers in jobs which, according to them could be performed both by men and women. The most important reason given by a number of employers to prefer men over women as employees, was that the attitude of other employees, who are predominantly male, creates certain problems once the women are employed in the establishments and/or certain special problems of administration arise with the employment of women. (Table III:5). Such reasons were given by 35 and 28 per cent of such employers who stated that they prefer males over female workers. Nineteen per cent of them gave higher productivity of men as the reason for preference and 13 per cent preferred men employees for the reasons of lower turnover and absenteeism among men than among women. Thus basically the employers' attempts to avoid employing women primarily lie in the fact that they are women, and, therefore, their presence in a male dominated employment situation creates certain attitudinal problems, and as women, they have to perform certain household duties; and are dependent on males, due to which they tend to abstain from, and leave jobs more often than men.

On the other hand, most of those who would prefer to employ women in certain jobs find them suitable for the reason of higher efficiency (Table III:6). Of course, there are only a few jobs in which such preference is shown and that too by a small percentage of employers in different activities. The largest number of employers, over one-fifth of them, would prefer employing women in lower grade clerical jobs in various activities. Fixed location sales



Table II: 5 Reasons for Preference For Male Worker

Occupational Group	No. of preference	Reasons (Number of Responses)					Total
		1	2	3	4	5	
Public Administration	6	-	1	1	1	3	12
Manufacturing (Public)	5	-	-	1	1	1	8
Manufacturing (Private)	12	1	3	1	5	-	22
Construction	-	-	2	5	3	3	13
Trade and Commerce	14	1	1	2	9	7	34
Banking&Insurance (Public)	-	-	1	-	1	-	2
Transport & Communication	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Education: School (Public)	4	-	-	-	-	-	4
Education: School (Private)	9	-	-	-	-	1	10
Other Services - Hotel	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
- Theatres	1	-	-	-	-	1	2
TOTAL	53	2	8	11	20	16	110

Code:

1. Lower Turnover than women
2. Less frequent leave taking than women
3. Higher productivity than women
4. No problem of attitude of other employees
5. No special requirements of administration

Table III:6 Preferences for Women in Jobs

Jobs in which women are preferred	% of establishments showing preference for women in different activities											Reasons for preference (Number of responses)				
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	1	2	3	4	5
Supervisory	20	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	27	100	-	8	7	7	3	1
Stenographers & Typists	20	43	15	-	9	-	50	-	-	-	-	10	8	7	3	2
Office Assistants (higher grade)	-	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-
Office Assistants (Lower grade) Clerks	50	43	35	-	9	-	50	-	11	-	100	22	16	11	2	1
Sales persons	20	14	10	-	15	50	-	-	-	100	-	13	9	8	3	6
Peons, Ayahs (Sweepers)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	18	-	-	3	3	2	-	-
Production Process Workers (Skilled)	-	28	40	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	8	4	1	-
Production Process Workers (Unskilled)	-	-	-	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	5	5	-	3
Teachers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	75	90	-	-	13	13	10	1	-
TOTAL												70	55	13	10	7

Activity Code: 1. Public Administration, 2. Manufacturing (Public Sector, 3. Manufacturing (Private)  
 4. Construction; 5. Trade; 6. Banking & Insurance; 7. Transport; 8. Schools (Public);  
 9. Schools (Private); 10. Hotels and 11. Theatres.

Reasons for Preference: 1. Higher efficiency; 2. Better devotion to work; 3. Easier personnel administration; 4. Customers attraction and 5. Any other.

jobs are also reported to be particularly suitable for women especially in trading establishments and hotels. The next category of job in which employers find women particularly suitable are skilled production process jobs in manufacturing of certain kinds. Employers in construction find women particularly suitable for unskilled jobs. Majority of schools would preference as teachers, and a small proportion of employers, mainly in public administration and public sector manufacturing would also find women more suitable for stenographic and clerical jobs.

Why would these employers prefer women in the jobs they report they would do? In most cases reason reported is better efficiency, followed by better devotion to work. Practically all the employers give both the reasons or at least the reason of better efficiency. And this is true of all kinds of jobs in which preference for women workers has been expressed by the employers. In trading establishments, of course, the preference for women sales workers is also significantly attributed to the 'customer attraction'. For whatever reasons the employers prefer them, women workers could be expected to constitute a large proportion if not, the whole of the workforce in these occupations and activities, thus resulting into a tendency towards sex segregation.

#### Segregation Arising Out of the Workers' Job Preferences

Part of the segregation that is found may be a result of the employers' practice of discrimination on the basis of sex, thus enforcing a sexual division of work, horizontally as well as vertically

But the phenomenon of such segregation may also be a result of the workers' preferences and attitudes. For some reason or the other, men may consider certain jobs as 'female' jobs and may, therefore, not apply for them; and women, on the other hand, may not offer for 'muscular' or 'outgoing' kinds of jobs. The information relating to the kinds of jobs tried by the male and female workers in our sample, however, does not suggest any absolute segregation, though it does indicate relative difference in preference. Information on jobs tried earlier than the present one was also given in Chapter II. (Table II:6). Here the information relating to all jobs, past and present, is given in Table III:7. The largest number of applications made both by male and female workers related to the jobs of clerks and typists. But the next important jobs most often applied for by men were in the supervisory categories, while those applied by women most often were the jobs of teachers.

Both men and women applied for a wide and common variety of jobs. No important jobs was left out either by men or women candidates, exclusively for the other sex. But looking at the pattern of jobs applied for by men and women, a few important facts emerge. The frequency of applications would very much depend on the job opportunities and most commonly held qualifications of the candidates. Clerical positions seem to be the most frequently available jobs in Lucknow, and most girls and boys have general educational qualifications that would certainly, and in many cases only, qualify them for these jobs. That is why almost one-third of the frequencies

Table III:7 Patterns of Jobs Applied for (including the Present Job)

Jobs	Frequency of Appli- cations by Females		Frequency of app- lications by males	
		%		%
Executive	7	1.75	3	2.70
Supervisory	31	7.75	17	15.31
Stenographers and Personal Assistants	31	7.75	16	14.41
Office Assistant (Higher grade)	14	3.50	10	9.00
Clerk and Office Assistants (Lower grade)	111	27.75	35	31.53
Sales jobs	22	5.50	12	10.81
Telephone operators and Receptionists	6	1.50	1	0.90
Watchmen, Doormen and Sweepers	5	1.25	2	1.80
Peons	10	2.50	5	4.50
Hotel boys, Waiters etc	2	0.50	-	-
Weavers and Spinners	1	0.25	1	0.90
Binders and Packers	4	1.00	-	-
Turners and Fitters	-	-	2	1.80
Semi-skilled Production Process Workers	21	5.25	2	1.80
Unskilled Production Process Workers	40	10.00	11	9.91
Teachers	86	21.50	11	9.91
Medical Workers	5	1.25	-	-
TOTAL	398	100	111	100



of jobs tried for, are in this category both for men and women. This situation on the one hand reflects the general demand and supply condition in the market, and on the other sets any doubts about sex segregation in this occupation at rest. But then, teaching jobs in the schools which has the next largest number of frequencies of applications by our respondents, even though attracting candidates from both sexes, seem to be viewed by women as one of the most suitable jobs for themselves, while men seem to consider it suitable for them to a much smaller extent. Around 22 per cent of the applications from women respondents were for teaching jobs, while the corresponding percentage for male respondents was only around 10. A tendency of sex segregation is thus evident here. Higher grade secretarial and supervisory jobs reveal a feature of segregation in favour of men, to the extent that a much smaller proportion of women as compared to men even try for these jobs. So is true of the sales jobs. In the production process occupations while unskilled jobs are viewed equally suitable by men and women, certain semi-skilled jobs like that of binders and packers are more favoured by women, other skilled production process jobs such as turners and fitters are exclusive preserves of male workers.

#### Chapter IV : Discrimination in Recruitment

Our analysis in the previous chapters suggests that a significant part of the explanation of the low proportion of women workers in the city workforce as a whole as well as in a large number of occupations in different activity lies in low participation rates of women and their own perception about their suitability for and, therefore, attempts to secure various jobs. True that such a perception is also, to a large extent, a function of the existing pattern of employment of men and women and the resulting social attitudes. The patterns of demand for women workers as revealed in the practices and results of recruitment by the employers themselves shape, to a large degree, the supply pattern of female labour. The long established fact of non-employment of women in certain jobs, for whatever reasons, influences the supply behaviour of labour by women to the extent they also tend to accept the notion that they are not suitable for these jobs.

##### Male-Female Proportions in Recent Recruitments.

Let us, therefore, turn to the question as to what happens to the women workers who do, in fact, offer their labour for wage/salary employment in various sectors. Given the fact that in most jobs, the male applicants are more than female applicants, do the two have equal probability of getting selected? If not at what stage and how the element of discrimination creeps in despite the absence of overt discrimination? For this purpose, we look into the pattern

of new recruitment and promotions in the sample establishments, during the two years before the reference period of our study (1979 and 1980), in terms of the applications and selections by sex, and procedures of recruitments, and any inherent bias in them in favour or against male or female candidates.

The 97 sample establishments filled in 1986 new vacancies during the two years; 14.60 per cent of them went to women candidates as fresh recruits or promotees (Table IV:1). Of the 1573 new persons recruited, women constituted 15.45 per cent. The female workers constituted 15.89 per cent in the stock of current employment, and thus the percentage of women in the workforce of the sample establishments showed no significant tendency of marginal change. The sectors which revealed a significantly higher proportion of women in the new recruitment than in the stock of current employment were : public administration (30.61 against 19.95%), public sector manufacturing (14.60% against 2.87%), public transport and communication (8.78% against 5.45%), government schools (90.90% against 82.41%). Thus it is mainly in the public sector activities that any trends in increasing proportion of women in employment is noticed. In the private sector, even in the comparable activities like manufacturing and education (schools) the new recruitment had a smaller percentage of women than in the current stock of employment. Only trade and commerce activities have shown a tendency of rising proportion of women workers, in the private sector, where as against 0.25

Table IV : 1 Recruitment in Sample Establishments During Last Two Year :  
By Division of Activity and Sex

Activity	Direct Recruitment		Promotions		Total	
	Male	Female Total	Male	Female Total	Male	Female Total
Public Administration	34	15 (30.61)	20	16 (44.44)	54	31 (36.47)
Manufacturing (Pub)	421	72 (14.60)	297	7 (2.20)	718	79 (9.91)
Manufacturing (Pvt)	55	- (0.00)	13	- (0.00)	68	- (0.00)
Construction	429	84 (16.37)	-	-	429	84 (16.37)
Trade & Commerce	47	3 (6.00)	26	20 (43.48)	73	23 (23.96)
Bank & Insurance	4	- (0.00)	-	- (0.00)	4	- (0.00)
Transport and Communication (Public)	187	18 (8.78)	8	-	195	18 (8.59)
Education: Schools (Public)	1	10 (90.90)	-	1 (100.00)	1	11 (91.66)
Education: Schools (Private)	8	32 (80.00)	-	3 (100.00)	8	35 (81.34)
Others : Hotels	105	9 (7.89)	2	- (0.00)	107	9 (7.75)
Theatres	39	- (0.00)	-	- (0.00)	39	- (0.00)
TOTAL	1330	243 (15.45)	366	47 (11.38)	1696	290 (14.60)

(Figures in parantheses are percentages of women to total recruits)

per cent of women in the current workforce, the women appointees constituted six per cent of the workers recruited during the last two years.

Thus while the women seem to have more or less retained their relative position in employment in the establishments, they seem to have got less than proportionate share in relatively higher positions which are filled in on the basis of promotions. Women constituted around 16 per cent of the workers in the sample establishments; of the promotees they constituted only 11 per cent. Here the two sectors which gave the women workers a higher than existing share in promotions were : public administration where 44 per cent of the jobs filled in by promotion went to women and trade and commerce where the corresponding percentage was 43. Also, all the promotions, though numbering very small, in the schools, both public and private, went to women. Public sector manufacturing units in the sample filled in about 800 positions during the two years under consideration, of which 38 per cent were filled in by promotions, but women got only two per cent of them. Establishment in private sector manufacturing and public sector transport and communication also filled in some positions through promotion, but none of these positions went to a women worker. Thus it looks that even though the women are finding it easier to enter establishments as workers, they still find it difficult to climb up the ladder into higher positions.

That the women have lower access to the relatively higher positions in the organisations of their employment is evident from the occupational pattern of the new male and female recruits and promotees (Table IV:2).



Table IV:2 Persons Recruited and Percentage of Women, by Occupation

Occupational Category	Persons recruited						Total		
	Through Direct Recruitment			Through Promotions			No	% of women	
	No.	Women		No.	% of women				
		No.	%		No.	%	No.	%	
Executive	68	1	1.47	21	0	0.00	89	1	1.12
Supervisory	121	7	5.79	86	3	3.43	207	10	4.83
Stenographers	48	9	18.75	0	0	0.00	48	9	18.75
Higher Grade Assistants	28	3	10.71	0	0	0.00	28	3	10.71
Clerks	204	30	14.71	106	20	18.87	310	50	16.13
Telephone Operators	17	6	35.29	-	0	0.00	17	6	35.29
Sales Workers	34	9	26.47	3	0	0.00	37	9	24.32
Peons	122	4	3.28	8	0	0.00	130	4	3.08
Ayats and Sweepers	68	15	22.06	37	2	5.41	105	17	16.19
Hotel Waiters	23	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	23	0	0.00
Skilled Production Workers	267	34	12.73	141	19	13.48	408	53	12.99
Unskilled Production Workers	527	82	15.56	8	0	0.00	535	82	15.33
Teachers	46	43	93.48	3	3	100.00	49	46	93.88
TOTAL	1573	243	15.45	413	47	11.38	1986	290	14.60

Of the new entrants in employment women constituted substantial proportion among teachers (93.88%), telephone operators (35.89%), sales workers (21.32%), ayahs and sweepers (16.17%), stenographers (18.75%), and unskilled workers (15.33%). But they constituted only 1.47 per cent among executive and 4.83 per cent among supervisory categories. Even among office assistants, a line job, they constituted only 10.71 per cent and in skilled production process jobs 13 per cent. Women got no share in promotion to executive jobs, only 3.45 per cent in the supervisory, and 1.16 per cent in the skilled occupations in manufacturing. The only occupation in which women could get a significant proportion of positions filled in by promotions is that of clerks (18.37%), besides, of course, in teaching jobs where a very small number of promotions that took place during this period were received by women only.

#### Application-Selection Ratios by Sex

Are the overall low proportion of women in new employment and differential proportion in different sectors and occupations due largely to the lower and differential supply of candidature by women? But do the recruitment processes and practices have a tendency to depress this proportion further? To probe into this question we now look into the pattern of applications by sex for various categories and in various sectors, during the years 1979 and 1980.

No doubt the number of applications per notified vacancy is much larger from male than from female candidates. In all, we have

information about 784 vacancies notified by the sample establishments during the years under consideration (Table IV:3). Of them,

Table IV:3 Applications and Selections by Sex

Activity	No. of qualified applicants per post			Selection/application ratio		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Public Administration	84.90	23.6	108.51	0.007	0.008	0.008
Manufacturing (Public)	1.51	0.34	1.85	0.53	0.20	0.47
Manufacturing (Private)	1.9	0.22	2.12	0.40	0.50	0.42
Construction	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trade & Commerce	0.82	0.104	0.924	0.80	0.80	0.80
Banking & Insurance	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transport and Communication (Public)	0.94	0.16	1.10	0.50	0.60	0.51
Education : Schools (Public)	0.22	2.8	3.02	0.50	0.31	0.32
Education : Schools (Private)	1.5	12.4	13.9	0.08	0.07	0.07
Hotels	0.37	0.62	1.00	0.90	0.90	0.90
TOTAL	17.03	5.37	22.39	0.035	0.028	0.033

for 298 vacancies in construction sector, no data were available about the number of applications received, as no formal applications were asked for, nor any record kept by construction establishments about the number of persons who turned up for seeking work. Overall, for one position to be filled in 22 candidatures were received of which 17 were from men and 5 from women. The largest

number of applications per post were reported in 'public administration' sector where 109 candidates, 85 men and 24 women applied for each post. The establishments where female applicants exceeded males were schools and hotels; in the former there were 12 applications per post while in the latter there was only one application per post.

Overall, one out of 29 male candidates got selected, while among female candidates one out of 38 was selected. The probability of a male applicant getting selected thus works out to 0.035 and that of a female applicant 0.028 (Table IV:3). The sectors which showed a higher probability of female selection per application than of male are public administration, private manufacturing and transport. Strangely enough even the predominantly female sector like schools showed a lower selection-application ratio for women than for men, particularly in the government schools where one out of two male applicants and one out of three female applicants got selected. This may be a result of large female applications and some positions reserved for men only. The public sector manufacturing showed the worst disadvantage for women against men : the selection-application ratio for men was 0.53 and that for women 0.20.

Women candidates seem to have a higher probability of selection per application than men in quite a few occupations. In executive, clerical and ministerial jobs one out of a fewer female applicants got selected than male applicants (Table IV:4). But certain

Table IV:4 Applications and Selection by Sex and Occupation

Occupation	Number of qualified applicants per post			Selection/application ratio		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Executive	1.54	0.08	1.62	0.60	0.90	0.80
Supervisory	1.10	0.04	1.14	0.71	0.60	0.65
Stenographers	0.14	0.50	0.64	1.00	0.75	0.90
Upper Grade Assistants	2.00	0.50	2.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Clerks	48.20	1.21	49.41	0.02	0.68	0.02
Telephone Operators	0.69	0.38	1.07	1.00	1.00	1.00
Sales Workers	1.19	0.05	1.25	0.80	1.00	0.84
Peons	25.50	0.34	25.84	0.03	0.50	0.26
Ayats and Sweepers	1.80	1.40	3.20	1.00	0.43	0.56
Hotel Waiters	0.50	0.50	1.00	1.00	0.00	1.00
Weavers	1.00	-	1.00	1.00	-	1.00
Skilled Production Process Workers	1.05	0.20	1.25	0.83	0.19	0.51
Unskilled Production Process Workers	1.12	0.14	1.26	0.85	0.35	0.92
Teachers	1.24	39.80	41.04	0.05	0.02	0.03
TOTAL	17.03	5.37	22.39	0.035	0.028	0.033



occupations which were the major absorbers of the new recruits did not reveal a favourable ratio of selection to application for females. The unskilled workers in manufacturing was the largest category absorbing over one-third of the new recruits, which had a selection-application ratio of 0.35 for female candidates as against 0.85 for males. The position was still worse in case of skilled occupations in manufacturing which <sup>accounted for</sup> 17 per cent of the new recruits, with 17 out of 20 males but only 4 out of 20 of the female candidates selected.

Overall, the probability of a female applicant getting selected is 25 per cent lower than that of a male applicant. But since the number of female applicants is lower in aggregate than of male applicants, the ratio of male selected to females selected is almost 6:1 in total. Even in the occupations and sectors where the selection-application ratio of females is significantly higher than that for the males, the proportion of women actually recruited is very small as compared to men.

#### Sex-sensitivity of Recruitment Methods

The sample establishment belonged to the various sectors of activity, different sizes of employment and are subject to varying kinds and degrees of state regulation so far as methods for inviting candidature and for selection of candidates for recruitment were, therefore, found operating among different establishments. In all 113 occasions arose in 97 establishments during the last two years when they initiated a process of recruitment. In 59 cases,

the candidature was invited informally; in another 27 cases through advertisement, in five cases through employment exchanges and in 22 cases employment exchanges and advertisement were combined. Employment exchanges were used most often for recruitment in public administration and public sector manufacturing; advertisement for appointment in the schools, and informal channels by trade and commerce, private manufacturing and construction establishments.

Was there any difference observed in response of women candidates on the basis of the channel used for inviting candidature? Most employers reported no difference. Of the 23 employers who thought it makes a difference how applications are invited, 18 reported that the women respond better to advertisement in the newspapers. Most of these employers were in public administration and private schools. It was, however, found on examination of the pattern of response from female candidates to different modes of inviting candidature that employment exchange proved least popular mode with women workers. Newspaper advertisements were also not found to get very high response from them. But informal channels proved the most effective in eliciting response from women candidates. It may, however, be noted that these channels are mostly used by small establishments with relatively low levels of remuneration to the workers.

For selection of candidates, the most often used method was of 'personal interviews' only, (45%), followed by informal methods, recommendations and references (33.61%). In 15.5 per cent cases

selections were made on the basis of written tests only. In the rest of the cases two or more of these methods including 'application rating' were combined.

The women candidates are found to perform better than men when formal methods, either personal interviews, or a combination of written tests and personal interview, besides application rating are adopted, and worse than men when mainly informal methods of recommendations and references only are used. The cases available from the records of the responding establishments yield a selection-application ratio of 0.68 for men and 0.74 for women when personal interview only is the basis of selection; 0.70 for men and 0.73 for women when a combination of formal methods is adopted; but it is 0.93 for men and 0.79 for women when candidates are recruited informally on the basis of recommendations and references.\*

To a certain extent these differences are also a reflection of the differences in jobs, as different methods are adopted for different jobs with varying preference patterns for male and female candidates. There are a few cases in which more than one method was used. (That of clerical jobs is one of them.) In this case when 'interview only' was used women far surpassed men in selection-application ratio, but when a combination of methods, written tests and interview was adopted, male candidates scored better. In the case of ministerial jobs, on the other hand, interview proved unfavourable to women while informal methods treated men and women equally. In the job of sales

\* These ratios are higher than the overall ratios reported earlier, because the information available and used here is for a limited number of cases. The ratios are, therefore, good enough only for male-female comparison, not for overall estimates.

*meant of employers -*

Workers both formal and informal methods seemed to give equal chances to both sexes.

While the above observations are based on the analysis of the limited records available on the applications, selection and methods of recruitment, we also asked employers if they felt that women perform differentially from men in different processes of selection. Most employers could not give a definite answer. But of the few that responded most felt that women candidates are better on the basis of application rating, their 'paper qualifications' are generally higher than those of male candidates; they perform equally well, if not better, in the written tests as well as in the interviews. Only a small number of respondents reported lower performance of women on the basis of application rating, about one-third thought they do not do as well as men in written tests and one-third also thought their performance in the interview is worse than of the male candidates. All respondents from schools considered the performance of women better on any of the three bases - application rating, tests and interviews; most employers in the trade and commerce found women doing not as well as men in any of the stage of selection; while, those in public administration mostly found women equal or better in qualifications; at par with men in interviews, but mostly performing lower in written test.

From the evidence we have from the records of the establishments and from the responses of employers two propositions seem to emerge:

one, the women may stand equal chance with men for getting selected for a job if the methods of selection are formalised; and two, they may also stand better chance if personal interview is an important element in the selection process. The evidence from the two sources used here, records and responses, more or less, conforms with each other.

#### Reasons for Low Proportion of Women Workers : Employers Responses

The evidence relating to the application and recruitment pattern in the sample establishments during the last two years suggests that, in general, the probability of a woman candidate getting selected is slightly lower than that of a male candidate. The employers' responses to the questions relating to the performance of women candidates vis a vis male candidates and the evidence thrown up by the records of recruitment in this respect also does not suggest a significant disadvantage to the women candidates in selection process. In the given context, it is, therefore, not surprising to find that most employers find the women's failure to come forward to work and/or their household responsibilities as the main reasons for the small proportion of women in employment. Two-thirds of the employers considered each of the above two factors important (Table IV:5). Only one-sixth felt that women do not have the necessary capabilities for work outside homes and around one-thirds considered the non-employment of women rather natural in view of the general lack of jobs even for men; they considered women only as secondary workers.



Table IV:5 Reasons for Small Proportion of Women in Employment  
(Number of Responses)

Activity	Reasons				
	1	2	3	4	5
Public Administration	9	1	3	9	8
Manufacturing (Public)	5	3	1	2	2
Manufacturing (Private)	5	4	4	12	13
Construction	4	1	2	4	4
Trade and Commerce	23	4	13	23	19
Banking and Insurance (Public)	1	1	1	1	1
Transport and Communica- tion (Public)	1	-	-	1	-
Education : School (Public)	4	-	-	1	1
Education : School (Private)	6	-	6	8	4
Hotels	2	-	-	1	-
Theatres	1	-	-	2	-
TOTAL	61	14	31	64	52

- Reasons:
1. They do not come forward for work;
  2. They do not have necessary capabilities
  3. There are not enough jobs for men, women are secondary workers
  4. They have to look after household;
  5. Employers mostly prefer men as employees.

Yet, (over half (54%) of the employers also gave the 'employers' preference for men as a reason for low proportion of women in employment.) Thus it looks that while the relative lack of response from women is an important factor in their small proportion in the workforce, the employers' perception about women employee is a significant factor in lowering the proportion of women employees below what their relatively low response might suggest. The situation may vary from job to job, but in aggregate a male candidate gets preference over a female candidate.

Is the current cost of employing a woman is higher than of a man? This may be reflected in the wages, conditions of work and benefits. So far as wages are concerned, it is a well known fact that women are paid the same, if not lower. We, therefore, asked employers if they have to make some special difference in conditions of work for their women employees. About one-fourth of the employers reported no necessity of difference in working conditions of women from men employees (Table IV:6). Thirty per cent employers, most of those in private manufacturing sector felt that they had to grant more frequent leave of absence to women employees; 23 per cent, most of them in public administration and trade and commerce, had to adjust hours of work for women employees, and a similar percentage, mostly in private manufacturing and trade and commerce, considered special arrangement in allocation of work for women employees necessary. About one-fifth of employers, most of them in public administration had to provide for special social security measures (probably

Table IV:6 Difference in Working Conditions of Females

Activity	No. of diffe- rences	Differences in respect of				
		1	2	3	4	5
Public Administration		5	2	2	9	1
Manufacturing (Public)	2	1	2	3	1	
Manufacturing (Private)	4	3	7	12	3	
Construction	-	3	2	2	2	
Trade and Commerce	5	8	7	6	-	
Banking and Insurance (Public)	1	1	-	-	1	
Transport and Communication (Public)	-	1	-	1	-	
Education: Schools (Public)	2	-	-	1	1	
Education: Schools (Private)	7	-	1	1	2	
Hotels	2	-	-	-	-	
Theatres	-	-	-	-	-	
TOTAL	24	22	21	29	19	1

1. Hours of Work
2. Allocation of work
3. Leave of absence
4. Social security benefits
5. Any other.

maternity benefits) in case of women employees. Except for the last item, and to some extent, the need to grant leave more often, there does not seem a higher incidence of cost in case of women employees. The other reasons mainly relate to work arrangements which an establishment should be able to make without involving any significant extra cost.

#### An Estimate of the Extent of Discrimination

As we saw earlier, while there were 17 applications for a vacancy from men, the women applicants per vacancy were only five. Thus for every 100 vacancies, a total of 2200 candidates offered themselves, of them 77 per cent were male and 23 per cent females. The male candidates, then had a probability of 0.035 and female candidates 0.028 for getting selected. With five applications per post the chance that a female candidate would get selected in a post is 0.14. Fourteen per cent of the positions would thus go to women in the new recruitment. This tallies with the actual percentage of women in the new recruitment (14.60) computed on the basis of the records of the sample establishments for the years 1979 and 1980.

If one assumed a complete equality of opportunity, both in terms of the supply of and demand for labour, and absence of relative lack of willingness from women to work and complete absence of any discrimination in the recruitment practices one could expect women to constitute 45 per cent<sup>1</sup> of the workers recruited. Instead they constitute only 14.6 per cent, that is about one third of the expected

<sup>1</sup> Sex ratio in the population of Lucknow city (1981) is 832, thus women constitute 45 per cent of the population, and under assumption of similar age-structure for men and women, also of that in working age group.

proportion. [The entire gap of two-thirds of the women employment and one-third of the total employment, cannot be ascribed to the discrimination in recruitment.] Under assumptions of complete equality 45 per cent of the applications should have been from women but there were only 23 per cent applications from women, thus 22 per cent of the disadvantage crept in at the stage of supply itself. And then instead of getting 23 per cent of jobs (in proportion to actual applications) women got only 14 per cent of jobs. Thus the discrimination in recruitment contributed to the nine per cent out of the total disadvantage of 31 per cent (i.e. 45% share under assumed equality minus actual share of 14%). [If the total disadvantage of women in employment is taken as the base, which amounts to 68 per cent from the point of equality (i.e.  $45-14$  as % of 45), one could say that 54 per cent of it is explained by the supply factors, i.e. women not coming forward to work, and 14 per cent by the aggregate discrimination on demand side inherent in the process of selection.



## Chapter V : On-the-job Discrimination

The post-entry discrimination against women can generally manifest itself in one of the following ways : placement of women in low earning jobs, payment of lower wages and benefits to women workers, and relatively slower progress in career of women by way of smaller chances of promotions as compared to men. We examine each of these aspects in this chapter on the basis of data from employer establishments as well as from the respondent women employees.

### Earnings and Proportion of Women in Different Jobs

We have classified the various jobs in the different kinds of establishments into seven major categories : executive and supervisory, secretarial, ministerial, sales workers, production process workers, teachers and medical workers. [The relative proportions of women in the total workers and the average earnings in each of categories suggests a negative relationship between the share of women in employment and levels of earnings] (Table VI). The highest proportion of women workers is to be found among teachers, their average salaries, though not the lowest, are lower than the average; and the category with the next highest percentage of women, that is ministerial, has the lowest average earnings. Production process workers is, however, a category which has higher than average proportion of women workers with marginally higher than average earnings. Similarly, [a comparison among the various sectors of activity also suggests a tendency of low proportion of women workers in sectors

occupations are much below the average.] Among the various lines of production, garment knitting, and food products have an overwhelming majority of women workers, but the earnings in both these activities are the lowest among the various manufacturing lines.

### Earning-Differentials

None of the establishments, however, reported differences in the wage and salary rates of men and women workers in similar jobs. In fact, [it was found that the wage rates and salary scales are specified for each job and the selected candidates are paid accordingly irrespective of their being male or female.] <sup>excepting construction</sup> The only category of establishments which paid lower wages to women than men, <sup>because</sup> were the construction units. The most frequent reason advanced by the employers in these units for paying lower wages to women was that they are available for work at lower wages and that their productivity is lower, in that order.

Yet it is clearly evident that women workers on the whole earn lower than men. Part of the reason lies in the placement of women mainly in the low earning jobs. Another reason that seems to contribute to the difference in male and female earnings is that in the similar jobs men are more often than women on a time-scale of pay, thus bringing higher total emoluments and an assured increase in earnings over time. Since the workers in our sample are from regular establishments in various sectors, which require perennial and regular employment, most workers, male or female, are on a time-scale. Only 36 per cent of the female workers and 34 per cent of the male workers are employed on a fixed salary and not on a time-scale (Table V:2). There are, however, a

with high average earnings and vice versa. The highest monthly earnings are to be found in public sector manufacturing which has the lowest proportion of women workers. The sector with the next highest average earnings, namely, transport and communication, also has only a small percentage of women in its workforce. On the other hand, schools with predominance of women employees are among the low-paying establishments. Private sector manufacturing in our sample also have a quite high proportion of women among their employees, but one of the lowest wages. The same is true to a certain extent of the construction establishments. Only public administration sectors pays somewhat higher than average emoluments, with also higher than average proportion of women workers.

Similar pattern is revealed by the more detailed inter-occupation comparison within individual sectors. Taking the example of manufacturing sector we find that the category with the highest proportion of women workers is that of unskilled production process workers, that also has the lowest average earnings of Rs.187 against the overall average of Rs.609 for the sector. On the other hand, the jobs with the highest average of earnings at Rs.2247, Rs.958 and Rs.746, in the executive, engineering and supervisory categories, respectively, have only 0.67, 0.74 and 1.41 per cent women workers as against the overall proportion of 13 per cent of the sector as a whole. Clerical and skilled production process jobs are other categories with average or higher than average proportion of women, but earnings in these

occupations are much below the average. Among the various lines of production, garment knitting, and food products have an overwhelming majority of women workers, but the earnings in both these activities are the lowest.

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Table V:2 Workers With Time Scale and Starting Points of the Time Scale, By Occupation

Occupational Category	Starting Points of Time Scale											
	Female Workers						Male Workers					
	200	200-300	300-500	500+	No. of workers with out scale	Total	200	200-300	300-500	500+	No. of workers with out scale	Total
Executive	-	1	-	1	3	5	-	-	-	-	1	1
Supervisory	-	3	2	4	9	18	-	2	-	6	1	9
Stenographers	-	9	6	-	2	17	-	1	4	1	1	7
Upper Grade Assistants	1	6	6	-	1	14	-	2	6	-	1	9
Clerks	9	50	15	-	1	75	1	7	4	1	1	14
Sales Workers	3	3	1	-	13	20	1	1	-	-	5	7
Telephone Operators	3	-	-	-	2	5	-	-	-	-	1	1
Peons	7	-	-	-	1	8	-	-	-	-	1	1
Hotel Waiters	-	-	-	-	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	2
Weavers & Spinners	-	-	-	-	4	4	-	-	-	-	1	1
Other Skilled Workers	-	3	4	1	10	18	-	-	1	-	1	2
Unskilled Workers	-	1	-	-	33	34	-	-	1	-	-	1
Teachers	1	22	9	-	17	49	-	-	-	-	5	5
Para-medical Staff	-	-	3	1	-	4	-	1	1	-	3	5
TOTAL	24 (8.88)	99 (36.63)	45 (16.65)	7 (2.59)	98 (36.26)	273 (100)	4 (6.16)	14 (21.56)	17 (26.18)	8 (12.32)	22 (33.88)	65 (100)



few occupations in which majority of the workers, more often women than men, are found without a time scale. Thus in the supervisory category only 50 per cent of the women workers are on time scale, while among the men workers their percentage is 89; among the women sales workers 65 per cent are without a time scale, of male workers in this category also/were without time scale; but of teachers only 65 per cent of female, but 100 per cent of the male workers were on time scale. In construction, practically all women workers, and 75 per cent of the male workers were without a time scale, as the regular employees who are mostly in the supervisory categories were all men.

While there are differences within individual occupations and sectors, the overall ratios of workers on a time scale and without it are not different significantly among men and women. There are, however, significant differences between men and women as regards the starting point of the pay scale in which they are placed. Seventy one per cent of the women workers who are in the pay scales have a starting point lower than Rs.300 per month; 26 per cent a starting point between Rs.300-500 and three per cent above Rs.500 but usually below Rs.750. The corresponding percentages of men workers on time scale were : 42 per cent with a starting point upto Rs.300, 39 per cent between Rs.300 and Rs.500 and 19 per cent between Rs.500 and Rs.750. Similarly large were the differences in the total emoluments of men

and women even in the same occupational categories (Table V:3).

Table Vi3 Average Monthly Earnings by Occupation and Sex

Occupational Category	Earnings (Rs)	
	Female Workers	Male Workers
Executive	1165.20	2000.00
Supervisory	833.76	1438.11
Stenographers	731.57	858.25
Upper Grade Assistants	719.75	772.00
Clerks	650.13	798.51
Sales Workers	638.00	399.40
Telephone Operators	217.80	155.00
Peons, Ayahs and Sweepers	296.50	390.95
Hotel Waiters	450.00	500.00
Weavers and Spinners	178.00	250.00
Other Skilled Workers	512.36	560.00
Unskilled Workers	231.26	480.00
Teachers	406.95	398.20
Para-medical workers	757.00	770.00
ALL	597.05	720.74

The total emoluments consist of allowances (cost of living, house rent, city compensatory etc.) which have different rates in different

kinds of organisations. [Therefore, part of the difference in total emoluments is a function of the type of establishments a worker is employed, besides the pay scale operative in his/her case.] The public sector and large establishments, for example, have generally, more allowances, and therefore, larger emoluments at a given point in a pay scale, than the private and small establishments.

The average monthly earnings of the sample women workers estimate to Rs.597.05, and those of men workers to Rs.720.74 (Table V:3) : 22 per cent of women workers earned less than Rs.300 per month, another 35 per cent earned between Rs.300 and Rs.500, 33 per cent between Rs.500 and Rs.1000 and 10 per cent more than Rs.1000 per month (Table V:4). The percentage of male workers in emoluments ranges

Table V:4 Distribution of Workers in Different Earnings Range by Sex

Monthly Earnings Range (Rs)	Female Workers %	Male Workers %
<300	22.34	16.94
300-400	13.55	12.32
400-500	21.24	13.86
500-750	26.37	21.56
750-1000	6.95	10.78
1000-1500	7.69	13.86
TOTAL	100.00	100.00

were 17, 25, 33 and 25 respectively. Thus 57 per cent of women, but 42 per cent of men earned less than Rs.500 per month; 33 per cent of women and also of men earned between Rs.500 and Rs.1000, but in the earnings range of above Rs.1000 per month, there were 25 per cent of men but only 10 per cent of women workers. Let us see how the men and women workers are distributed among the various emoluments ranges in some major occupations. Lower grade clerical jobs have largest number in our sample of men as well as women workers. The average emoluments of women workers in this category are Rs.650 per month and those of male workers Rs.799 per month; 10 per cent of the women workers in this category earn over Rs.1000 per month and 43 per cent less than Rs.500 per month; of the men workers 28 per cent earn over Rs.1000 and 36 per cent less than Rs.500 per month. The women stenographers and upper grade assistants earn Rs.732 per month, their male counterparts earn Rs.858 per month. The women workers in the supervisory categories earn Rs.834 and men Rs.1438 per month, most men in this category earn over Rs.1000 while most women between Rs.400 and Rs.1000 per month.

#### Male Female Earnings Differentials by Education and Years in Service

It is interesting to note that [male-female differences in monthly earnings are in favour of women at low levels of education and in favour of men at the higher levels of education] (Table V:3). Illiterate women earn higher than illiterate men workers, and similar is the case of workers upto primary level of education. Among those with secondary level of education, men score marginally higher than

Table V:5 Average Monthly Emoluments of Establishment Workers, Male and Female, by Level of Education

Level of Education	Monthly Emoluments (Rupees)	
	Female Workers	Male Workers
Illiterate	248.68	235.00
Primary	309.40	261.98
Secondary	491.47	528.71
First Degree	613.84	841.83
Higher	791.26	1193.94
ALL	597.05	720.74

women.] But the men with first degree education earn 38 per cent higher than women with similar qualifications, and with still higher educational qualifications, the difference in favour of men becomes as high as 51 per cent.]

What is the relationship between the years in service and total emoluments? Are there differences in this relationship between the male and female workers in the same occupation? To probe into these questions we have tabulated data relating to years in service and average earnings in respect of the sample female and male workers and overall average also computed/to compare it with average number of years in service in case of male and female workers in a number of occupations in which we have both male and female workers in the sample (TableV:6).



Table V : 6 Years in Service and Monthly Earnings

Occupational Category		Average Earnings with years in service						Average Yrs in service	Average earnings (Rs)
		<2	2-4	4-7	7-10	10-15	15+		
Executive	F	300	600	-	-	1900	849	12	1165
	M	-	1500	-	-	2000		8	2000
Supervisory	F	679	810	1050	630	1425	780	8	834
	M	1150	-	936	1200	1612	1920	10	1438
Stenographers	F	627	652	684	1100	550	-	6	732
	M	-	1300	-	825	-	931	15	858
Upper Grade Asst	F	-	575	-	595	680	933	16	720
	M	700	-	-	928	-	835	14	772
Lower Grade Asst/ Clerks	F	585	489	706	697	1200	1022	12	650
	M	520	686	496	1100	1250	-	4	799
Sales Workers	F	350	567	-	-	400	-	3	638
	M	280	350	300	-	469	-	7	399
Telephone Opera- tors / Receptionist	F	500	600	-	825	1320	-	7	217
	M	250						1	155
Peons, Ayahs, Sweepers	F	201	275	290	303	350	330	9	297
	M	150	364			418		9	391
Other Skilled Workers	F	282	542	738	450			12	512
	M	300	328			700		4	560
Unskilled Workers	F	242	165		100	125	250	6	231
	M	210			240			3	480
Teachers	F	288	330	558	454	558	776	15	497
	M	175	235	322		553		7	398

With longer period in service it is generally found, as expected, that average earnings rise both in case of the male and female workers in each occupation. The discontinuities in this relationship noticed in a number of occupations is due to the somewhat aggregative nature of occupational categories on the one hand and variations in the earnings of the same occupation among different sectors of activities, and differential pattern of length of service among establishments belonging to these different sectors. But it is observed, in general, that though among those with less than two years service, women employees are found to have higher earnings than men in most jobs except in executive and supervisory categories, yet with the increase in the length of service, women generally get paid lower despite having put in the same number of years as men. For example, women workers with 10 to 15 years of service receive lower earnings than men by an extent of 5, 12, 4, 15 and 16 per cent in executive, supervisory, clerical, sales and ministerial jobs. Thus it looks that women lose whatever initial advantage they might have in earnings over the longer period of service.

The comparison of the average length of service and average earnings among female and male workers suggest the following tendencies :

- (i) in a number of job categories, e.g. executives, upper grade assistants, clerks and skilled workers, the women workers have lower average emoluments despite a much longer average length of service in the job; ii) in a few jobs the male-female differences in emoluments are in the same direction as of the average length of service;

women have higher emoluments and longer period of service in the categories of teachers, and telephone operators and receptionists, and men among supervisors and stenographers but the progression in salary rise seems generally higher for similar difference in the length of service, in the case of men than women; (iii) in the jobs of sales worker women score better either despite lower period of service or even after accounting for a longer period of service. In the ministerial jobs, the average earnings of women are three-fourths of those of men, though average length of service is the same for both.

Length of service and monthly earnings are, however, positively and significantly related with each other both in case of the male and female workers separately. The coefficient of correlation between the two variables works out to 0.4422 in the case of female and 0.4321 in the case of male workers.

#### Female and Male Earnings Functions

Besides, the length of service, there are, of course, number of other variables which influence the earnings level of a worker, male or female. In order to examine the influence of some of the important factors postulated to influence earnings level and to see if the pattern of their influence differs between male and female earnings, we estimated earnings functions of male and female workers with the following as independent variables (i) age (A), (ii) educational qualifications (Q) measured in number of years of schooling;

(iii) length of service in years (L), iv) economic background of the worker (Y) indicated by the per capita household income. Coefficients of zero-order correlation among the variables are given below:

<u>Female</u>	A	Q	L	Y	<u>Male</u>	A	Q	L	Y
A	1	-0.0954	0.6988	0.2074	1	-0.0515	0.6337	-0.0131	
Q		1	0.1288	0.4222		1	0.1543	0.3277	
L			1	0.2755			1	-0.0177	
Y				1				1	
<hr/>									
r with earnings (E)	0.3035	0.4990	0.4422	0.5502	0.3202	0.5262	0.4321	0.5390	

The regression equation estimated for male and female workers separately yielded the following results:

#### Female

$$E = -71.0417 + 4.0366A + 23.0921Q + 11.4157L + 0.3765Y$$

(1.6318)      (6.7922)\*\*   (3.7037\*\*)   (6.2904)\*\*

$$R^2 = .4833 \quad N = 273$$

#### Male

$$E = -446.5379 + 9.5379A + 38.9745Q + 17.5756L + 0.8039Y$$

(1.5261)      (3.8653)\*\*   (2.5359)\*   (5.2022)\*\*

$$R^2 = .5912 \quad N = 65$$

(Values in parentheses are t values; \* = significant at 5% and \*\* = significant at 1% level of significance).

The explanatory value of the model used here, though not very high, is found reasonable. Three variables, qualifications, length of service

and economic background of the family are found to be significantly associated with the earnings of male as well as female workers. But coefficients of different independent variables suggest that even though they have a significant relationship with earnings, the degree of their influence on earnings tends to be lower in the case of women than of men. Thus women with similar age, educational qualifications and family background, are likely to earn less than men to the extent these factors have an influence on earnings.

Thus, though the variables considered here have influence on earnings both of the male and female workers, they seem to have greater additive power in the case of men than of women. If these variables could be taken as the rational and systematic causes of wage variations, then one can conclude that the irrationality and random elements seem more important in the determination of wage and salary structure of women than that of men. This is also indicated by the higher explanatory value of the model in the case of male workers than of the female workers, as indicated by the values of coefficient of determination, 0.5912 in equation for men and 0.4833 in that for women workers.

#### Age-Earning Relationship

It is somewhat surprising that age does not show a significant relationship with earnings in the multiple regression exercise, either in case of women or men. One reason for this could be a high degree of correlation ( $r = 0.6988$  for males and  $0.6337$  for males)



between age and length of service which, indeed, shows a highly significant relationship with earnings.) Still it is seen that age is positively associated with earnings and the zero-order correlation between the two also yields a significant, though rather low, coefficient. It is quite likely that in combination with other variables age turns out to be the least important factor, but in isolation from them, or in the event of their being controlled in the sample, age could yield a high degree of association with earnings. There is no reason to expect that age would influence earnings irrespective of the education and training background of different women workers and differences in occupational and employer characteristics. Age, therefore, may not turn out a significant variable explaining inter-employee earnings differentials. But is there, in general, an association between age and earnings? The correlation coefficient between the two suggests the existence of such relationship.

We, therefore, attempted to examine this relationship a little further by regressing age on earnings, first to see what is the nature of this relationship linear or exponential; and second to see if the relationship varies in the case of women and men employees. Various forms of functions were tried, separately for female and male employees in the following categories : (a) total sample (b) graduates and those with higher educational qualifications and (c) non-graduates including illiterates. The last group has, of course, a very wide educational range, but it was not split further by educational levels due to smallness of sample in the case of men. The

results of the various functions gave a very low explanatory power in terms of the values of coefficient of determination, but we were primarily interested not in the extent of explanation that age provides for earning differentials, but in the nature of the suitability of functions on the basis of the significance of the coefficients. On that basis, the following functions were found to be most appropriate:

$$i) \quad y = a + bx$$

$$ii) \quad y = a + bx^2$$

The results of the regression run using these functions for the three categories of sample are given in Table V:7.

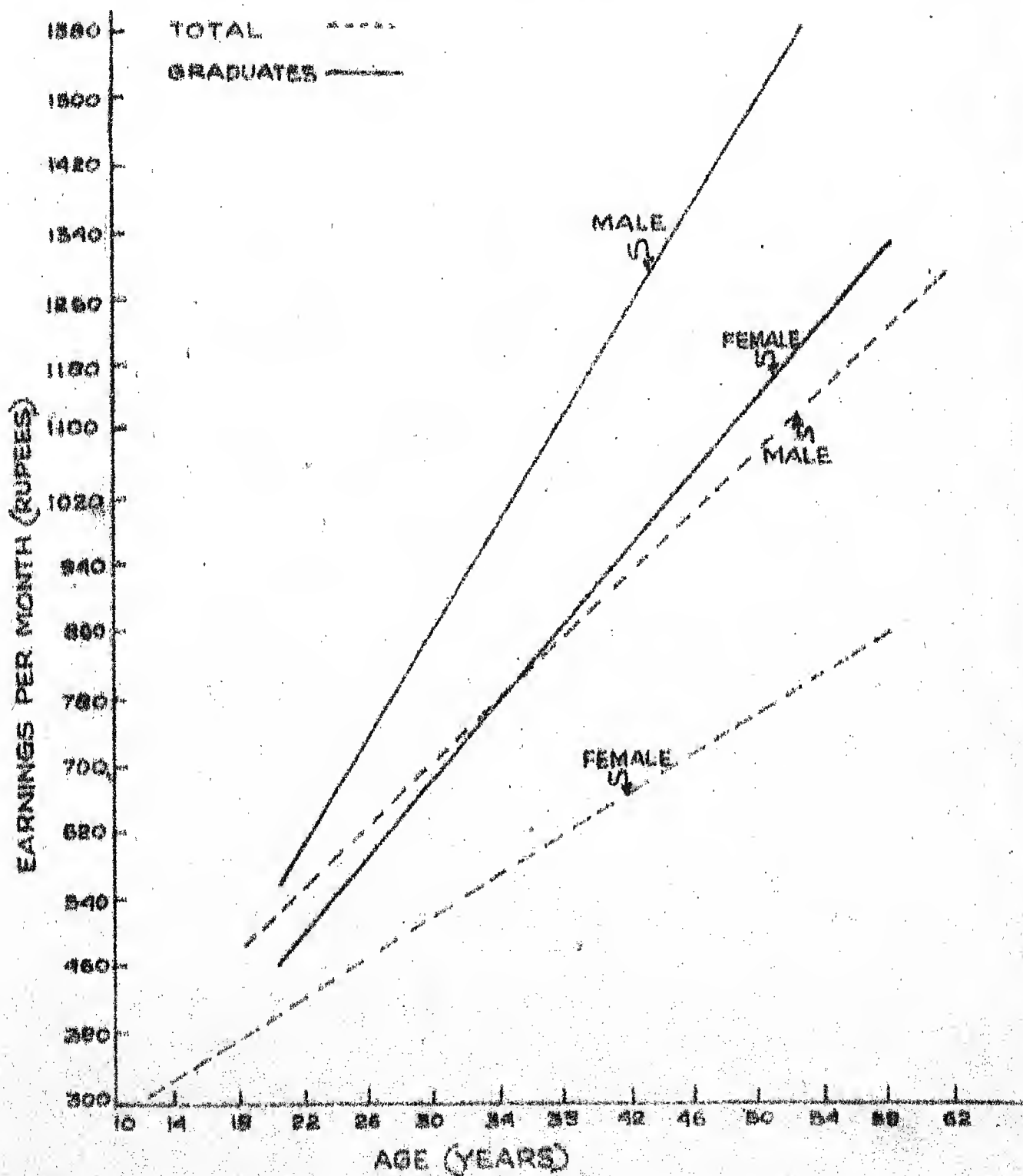
The regression lines have also been drawn, in case of total sample and the group of workers with Bachelor's or higher degree, in Graphs I and II for the linear and quadratic functions respectively. A perusal of the regression results and the graphs depicting them clearly suggests the following:

- i) Earnings are definitely related positively with age, even though other variables significantly dampen this relationship.
- ii) The relationship is generally linear throughout the age profile, though it suggests a somewhat exponential trend towards the higher age groups, particularly among men.
- iii) The values of earnings estimated on the basis of the coefficients yielded both in the linear and quadratic functions, point to a higher value of relationship of age within earnings in the case of men than of the women workers. Thus the women not only start at lower earnings, but also attain a lower rise as compared to men in their earnings, with advancement in age. This tendency is seen clearly in the Graphs I and II, both in the case of mixed group of total workers and of the somewhat controlled group of workers holding bachelor's or higher degree.

Table V: 7 Results of the Regression

Function	Sample Category	Females			Males		
		Constant	Regression Coefficient (T values)	R <sup>2</sup>	Constant	Regression Coefficient (T values)	R <sup>2</sup>
$y = a + bx$	All	167.70	11.8925 (5.2934)	0.09463	183.565	16.8640 (2.5337)	0.09247
	Graduates	44.2880	20.8723 (6.1250)	0.2078	-17.0273	28.9202 (3.3488)	0.2189
	Non-graduates	113.801	8.2502 (3.9030)	0.1102	270.810	4.0316 (0.9519)	0.0414
$y + a + bx^2$	All	367.601	0.1610 (5.1524)	0.0902	505.223	0.1986 (2.1720)	0.0701
	Graduates	406.334	0.2726 (5.7792)	0.1992	497.565	0.3733 (3.0162)	0.1853
	Non-graduates	240.110	0.1219 (4.1250)	0.1215	347.113	0.04803 (0.8770)	0.0353

## AGE EARNING RELATIONSHIP

REGRESSION LINE  $Y = a + bx$ 

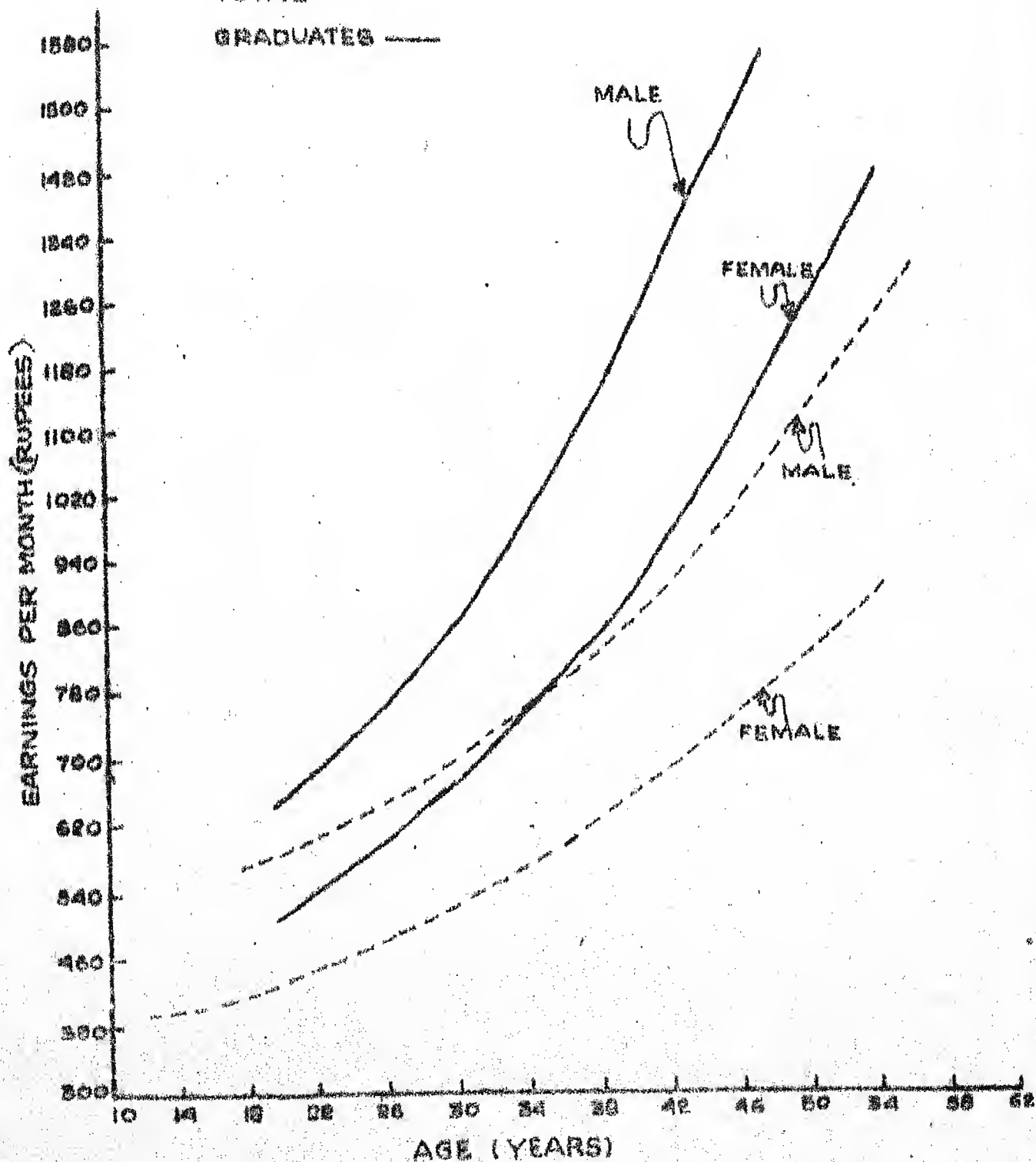
GRAPH I

# AGE EARNING RELATIONSHIP

REGRESSION LINE  $Y = a + bx^2$

TOTAL -----

GRADUATES ———



GRAPH 2



Thus the disadvantaged position of women workers is quite evident in so far as the rise in earnings with age is concerned. It looks that higher education can reduce this disadvantage to some extent, as is seen from a greater slope of regression line in the case of graduates than of the total workers. But this gain will be in comparison to uneducated and less educated women workers; their position vis a vis male workers with similar qualifications would still continue to be disadvantaged as is shown by the respective slopes of the regression lines relating to the male and female workers holding a graduate or higher degree.

#### Promotions

One of the reasons for such a disadvantage lies in the fewer promotion prospects of women employees than of male employees. In our sample of women workers, about one-third have ever got any promotion, as compared to around 40 per cent of the male workers covered in our control sample. This difference can be accounted for to a certain extent by the somewhat higher proportion of older workers among males than among females : those aged 35 years and above constituted 31 per cent of the male and 28 per cent of the female workers.

In order to probe further into the question of discrimination, if any, between men and women workers in respect of promotions, we have selected a few major occupations in which there are a sizeable number of workers in our sample, and have compiled information on the following aspects : percentage of workers having got any promotion, average

number of promotions per worker, average number of years in previous job before getting promotion and the percentage rise in earnings on promotion for the male and the female workers.

Table V:8 Promotions

Job Category	% of workers promoted		Average number of promotions per worker		Average number of years in previous job before promotion		Average percentage rise in earnings on promotions	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Supervisory	38	78	0.42	0.88	7.50	5.50	33.50	41.70
Upper Grade Assistant	89	50	1.44	1.00	6.50	7.50	52.40	25.00
Stenographer	17	70	0.17	1.10	1.75	9.00	30.00	57.00
Lower Grade Assistant	31	8	0.32	0.16	2.00	7.00	36.29	8.33
Teacher	14	25	0.14	0.25	6.88	11.00	37.63	27.13
Sales Worker	0	17	0	0.17	-	5.00	-	3.13
Skilled Production Worker	7	50	0.17	0.50	4.00	3.00	16.60	19.12

The results of this exercise as presented in table V:8 revealed a mixed situation. In certain occupations, particularly clerical and secretarial, women seem to have had an advantage over men in having secured promotions more often. On the other hand, the male workers had a definite edge over the female workers in supervisory categories, production and sales jobs, and even in the predominantly female

occupation of primary teachers. On an average, the number of years a worker had to stay in a position before getting a promotion is higher for women workers than for men in the supervisory and production process skilled jobs. In all other occupations considered here the female workers got promotions quicker than male workers. The earnings-advantage of the woman workers on promotion, however, does not seem corresponding to their relative promotion prospects.

The male and female workers' own assessment about their future promotion prospects, however, does not correspond to their past experience (Table V:9). Fifty-four per cent of the male workers

Table V:9 Promotion Prospects

	None	Promotion expected to a grade with % of higher salary			
		< 25	25-50	50-100	100+
Male	36	9	6	9	5
Female	128	62	57	13	13
TOTAL	164	71	63	22	18

see no promotion prospects, the proportion of such workers among women is 60. Of those male workers who see a promotion prospect for themselves, one-half expect promotion to a grade which will

give them a 50 per cent or higher rise in salary, but among women workers expecting promotions 43 per cent expect a salary rise of only upto 25 per cent and another 38 per cent between 25 and 50 per cent. Thus the women workers seem less optimistic than men, both in terms of the chances of their promotion, and advantages of salary they might get if they get promoted.)

As to why they do not hope for a promotion, most (59%) male non-expectants gave the reason of non-availability of higher positions in their organisations (Table V:10). Among the women workers

Table V: 10 Reason for No Promotion Prospects

	No higher post in line	No qualifi- fications	Any other		Total
			Will retire earlier	Private concern	
Male	10	4	1	2	17
Female	23	24	4	36	87
TOTAL	33	28	5	38	104

not expecting promotion, while 32 per cent gave this reason, the most frequently given reason in their case was that their organisation is a private concern. This reason, which was given by 37 per cent female non-expectants, implies two aspects : one that the private organisations being small and rather unstructured

do not offer much scope for promotions, and two, they do not have any set procedures for promotions, and therefore, even if opportunities exist, the workers are not certain of getting promoted despite their having necessary qualifications and experience.

While non-availability of higher jobs in the establishment was reported to be the reason for no prospect for promotion in most cases, quite a significant respondents saw no chance of promotion even though there were higher jobs in the organisation. Fifty five per cent of the female respondents reported the availability of jobs for promotion, but only two-thirds of them saw a chance for themselves; most of them gave the lack of seniority as the reason. Among the male respondents, 69 per cent reported availability of higher jobs, 78 per cent also saw a chance of getting promoted into them; seniority again was given by most as the reason for lack of prospects for their promotion.

At a closer investigation, a large number of women workers reported themselves lacking in certain attributes required for jobs with higher earnings, status and prospects available in the organisation, and therefore, saw no chance of their moving into them. About 27 per cent of the women workers felt that they do not have the necessary training and qualifications required for the higher jobs in their establishments, nine per cent reported the lack of necessary experience and four per cent thought they could not get through the departmental examinations necessary to get promotions. A small percentage did not want higher jobs for the reason of transfer of



place (3%) and travelling (3%) involved with job on promotion. A few would not take up or be offered higher jobs as these jobs required work in night shift. Around three per cent would find it difficult to combine the task of higher jobs on promotion with their household responsibilities. A small percentage (around 2) only thought that they do not expect promotion because male alone are considered for higher jobs.

#### Difference in Treatment at Workplace

Are the women workers treated differently by the employers and other workers? Around three-fourths of the women workers found no such difference in treatment (Table V:11). Of the one-fourth who felt they are treated differently from the male workers, about three-fourths again found this difference favourable and one-fourth unfavourable to them. The categories of establishments where the women workers reported different treatment to a significant extent are : transport, banking and insurance, and construction, in which the proportion of respondents reporting difference in treatment was 55, 48 and 42 respectively. But while in the former two categories of establishment most of such respondents saw the differential treatment favourable to them, the majority of such respondents in the construction sector found the difference unfavourable to them as compared to male workers. Yet 45 per cent of those who found themselves treated differently did not find this difference to have any effect

Table V:11 Difference in Treatment of Women Workers

Occupational Category	Number of Women Workers Reporting			Total
	No difference	Difference		
		Favourable	Unfavourable	
Public Administration	67	13	5	85
Manufacturing (Public)	23	8	1	32
Manufacturing (Private)	17	3	-	20
Construction	15	4	7	26
Trade and Commerce	29	1	-	21
Banking & Insurance	12	9	2	23
Transport and Communication	5	6	-	11
Schools (Public)	13	1	1	15
Schools (Private)	33	1	-	34
Hotels	5	-	1	6
TOTAL	210	46	17	273

on their work. Of the 55 per cent who found their work affected due to differential treatment, four-fifths thought it has a good effect on their work and one-fifth that it affects their work adversely. Among those who thought the differential treatment affects their work adversely, the teachers formed the predominant group.

To probe into the aspect of differential treatment a little further we asked the women respondents to recollect if any unpleasant situation arose during the tenure of their work and what aspects of their work was the situation related. Seventy one per cent of the women workers recollected no such situation (Table V:12). Over one-fourth of women respondents in the following categories of establishments, however, recollected such incidents : construction (73%), hotel (57%), banking and insurance (56%), transport (36%) and public administration (25%). About two-fifths of the incidents reported related to the work-routine and had no particular relation to the respondents being women. In another 22 per cent cases, the cause of the trouble, according to the respondents, was their co-workers' jealousy towards them due to their special position or favourable treatment to them by the employers/supervisors. In about two-fifths of cases, the incident had a basis in their being women. The details of each of the cases could not be recorded but the discussions revealed that in most cases unpleasant situation arose either because some male co-worker or supervisor made amorous or insulting advances and remarks to the respondents, or some co-workers

Table V:12 Unpleasant Situation Experienced by Women Workers

Occupational Category	No unplea- sant situa- tion	Number of Women Workers reporting unpleasant situation relating to			Total
		Routine work	Jealousy work	Attitu- de to women	
Public Administration	70	7	8	11	93
Manufacturing (Public)	27	2	2	1	32
Manufacturing (Private)	19	1	-	-	20
Construction	9	11	2	11	33
Trade and Commerce	19	1	1	-	21
Banking and Insurance	12	3	8	4	27
Transport & Communication	7	1	-	3	11
Schools (Public)	14	-	1	-	15
Schools (Private)	27	7	-	-	34
Hotels	4	1	-	2	7
TOTAL	208	33	19	33	293

got the impression that some "affair"      The relatively higher  
incidence of situations with sex overtones was found in establishments  
in construction, hotels, and public administration.

## Chapter VI : Employment Follow-up of Graduates

In order to supplement our analysis of labour market segregation and discrimination, carried out on the basis of information collected from the female and male employees of the sample establishments, we also conducted a small sample survey among the recent pass-outs from the local university. The sample consisted of 43 female and 35 males who passed their first degree from the university in the year 1977. To begin with, sample of 50 males and 50 females was drawn from the lists of pass-outs, on a random basis, but of them 7 females and 15 males could not be traced as they had left the town and their addresses were not known.

The advantage of this exercise lies in the standardisation of the sample entrants in the labour market in terms of certain basic attributes so as to bring the differentiation based on sex in a sharper focus. All the sample graduates hold the first degree (BA and B Sc); they obtained this degree in the same year, 1977, from the same university; and were in the limited range of age, between 22 to 25 years in 1981, when they were contacted. The scholastic achievements in terms of their grades in examination are also not very dissimilar, between male and females, though some of them have attained higher qualifications after their graduation in 1977. The last examination passed and divisions obtained by the female and male respondents are given in Table VI:1.

It may be noted that a large number of them over half of both male and female graduates, have continued their education and attained



Table VI:1 Educational Attainments of Respondents

Examination passed	Females				Males			
	Division				Division			
	I	II	III	Total	I	II	III	Total
B.A.	-	4	1	5	-	2	2	4
B.Sc.	2	1	-	3	2	4	1	7
M.A.	2	17	3	22	2	12	-	14
M.Sc.	3	1	-	4	1	3	-	4
Professional (Education, Library Science)	-	7	-	7	-	-	-	-
Others	1	1	-	2	-	4	2	6
TOTAL	8	31	4	43	5	25	5	35

a master's degree or a diploma. Assuming that these respondents studied for this course full time, their potentially effective period in the labour market could be only two years at the time of contacting them, as these courses are of two years duration which they could have passed only in 1979. Even in the case of respondents who did not study beyond first degree, the effective period in the labour market could not be more than four years. Our sample would, therefore, serve the purpose of studying differential behaviour by male and female respondents in entry into labour market.

their experience in job search, job preferences, and pre-entry discrimination by employers, but will not be useful for analysing the longer terms aspects of post-entry discrimination.

It is, however, quite likely that some of them have been in the job market since earlier and have continued their education mainly because their job search had not borne fruit. It is wellknown that in India, the pressure on higher and particularly post-graduate education is high, inter alia, due to the general unemployment among the educated, particularly graduates. In case of women, difficulty in getting suitable husbands, particularly due to the lack of resources to give the dowry demanded, also is found to increase pressure on post-graduate level of higher education. In such cases the women may not have been in the labour market, even if they did not continue their studies beyond first degree level.

#### Entry Into Labour Force

For the last two years before they were contacted, however, all respondents except two males who are still continuing their education at the doctorate level, can be presumed to be in the employment market, if they had intended to enter the labour force. All males are found either employed or seeking work, but 56 per cent of the females were not seeking work. Majority of girls having obtained a masters degree in science or a professional degree in teaching or library science were employed or seeking work, but most of those with a first degree

in arts, science or a Masters in arts subjects were not seeking work.

Table VI:2 Worker Status of Respondents

Educational Qualifications	Females			Males		
	Working	Un-employed	Not seeking work	Working	Un-employed	Not seeking work
B.A.	1	-	4	4	-	-
B.Sc.	-	1	2	7	-	-
M.A.	4	4	14	9	5	-
M.Sc.	1	2	1	3	1	-
Professional	3	2	2	-	-	-
Others	-	1	1	3	1	2
TOTAL	9	10	24	26	7	2

Thus majority of women graduates did not enter the labour market after completing their education. One of them used to work earlier, but is not currently seeking work after getting married. It is pertinent to note here that of the unmarried female respondents 57 per cent are either employed or seeking work, but of the married 85 per cent are neither employed nor seeking work. The major reason advanced by those not seeking work, is the attitude of their parents, parents-in-law or husbands towards women working out of homes. 71 per cent of the respondents not seeking work gave this reason. A

few (12%) considered their household responsibilities too onerous to allow them time and energy to work out of homes. Others did not seek work as they presumed that the kind of jobs they want are not available; and the one that are not available; and the one that are available are not to their liking.

Let us see if there is any pattern in the distribution of women respondents who sought employment and those who did not, in relation to the economic characteristics of their households. We have already noted that married women tend to participate in labour force much less than the unmarried ones.] The other variables that we may consider here are : income levels and dependency ratios of the households. The following table gives the percentage of female respondents not seeking work, by various levels of total household income, per capita income and dependency ratio:

Table VI:3 Women Not Seeking Work and Their Household Characteristics

Household Income		Per Capita Income		Dependency Ratio	
Household Income Range (P.M) (Rs.)	% women respondents not seeking work	Per capita income (P.M.) (Rs)	% of women respondents not seeking work	Dependency ratio	% of women not seeking work
< 500	0	< 100	40	< 0.66	0
500-750	50	100-150	60	.67-1.00	50
750-1000	70	150-200	50	1.00-1.50	0
1000-1500	46	200-300	50	1.50-2.00	33
1500-2000	57	300-400	0	2.00-3.00	81
2000 & above	83	400 & above	80	3.00 or higher	75



There is found to be an tendency of a negative relationship between income levels of the households, both total and per capita, and graduate women of the households entering the labour force, if one considers mainly the end-points of the income ranges. But the relationship is not continuous. The relationship between dependency ratio and women going out for work, however, is somewhat contrary to the expected one. Those with smaller proportion of workers in the household seem to opt more often out of labour force while ones with low dependency ratio are more often opting for jobs outside homes. Thus it looks that the explanation of the labour supply behaviour of the educated women in the given situation is beyond the employment and income status of the households, and may be found in the social attitudes of their families.

### Unemployment

Incidence of unemployment, seen as a percentage of unemployed to the total of working and unemployed, is higher among the female graduates (53%) than among the male graduates (21%). By educational category, the highest unemployment is found among those holding Master's degree in arts subjects, both in case of males and females. Among females, majority of science graduates and post-graduates are also found unemployed. Most respondents are unemployed for a period between one and two years, but the average period of unemployment for females is around 16 months and for males around 21 months. As to why they think they are unemployed, most male respondents felt that the reason



lies in the general scarcity of jobs while most females felt that the kind of jobs they consider suitable for themselves are not available. This implies that they are rather specific in terms of their requirements of jobs and to that extent the severity of unemployment in their case may be regarded less than those of the males.

One could hypothesise that an unemployed could be selective about his job in case the economic condition of his household is good enough to support him for a longer period of unemployment. If this hypothesis has any significance, it may get reflected in the higher degree of unemployment among those belonging to relatively better off households. This, however, is not found to be the case (Table VI:4). In fact,

Table VI:4 Distribution of Working and Unemployed Respondents by  
Income Levels  
(Percentages)

	Female Respondents		Male Respondents	
	Working	Unemployed	Working	Unemployed
(i) <u>Total Household Income</u> (Rs. per month)				
< 500	100	0	-	-
500-750	0	100	83	17
750-1000	0	100	100	-
1000-1500	71	29	75	25
1500-2000	100	0	40	60
2000 and above	83	17	80	20
(ii) <u>Per Capita Income (Rs. p.m.)</u>				
< 100	67	33	100	0
100-150	0	100	80	20
150-200	50	50	50	50
200-300	50	50	84	16
300-400	33	67	80	20
400 and above	100	0	75	25

a larger proportion of female graduates are found unemployed in the lower household income ranges, than in the higher income ranges; but the relationship is not clear once per capita income is considered. In case of male respondent no relationship is discernible between total or per capita household income, and incidence of unemployment among them. Therefore, it looks that unemployment, either among men or women, is a real phenomenon, and not necessarily a result of the respondents not taking jobs available but not highly suitable because they can afford to wait. If at all, the relationship that has some validity is the one between low income and high unemployment among women, implying that these women respondents, need jobs but jobs are not accessible to them, due probably to the low socio-economic status of their households. The same, however, cannot be said about the male respondents.

#### Job Search and Selection-Application Ratios

A total of 62 and 46 jobs respectively were applied for by the male and female respondents, in their pursuit of work; and the males succeeded in securing jobs in 24 and females in 14 cases. Thus the probability of securing a job applied for works out to 0.387 in case of males and 0.304 in case of females. These figures suggest, but a small element of discrimination in the selection procedures, against women.

The pattern of jobs applied for is, however, very different between

the male and female respondents. The jobs which attracted largest proportion of applications from the female graduates were in the secretarial category; one-third of all applications by them were for those jobs. The next important job for them was of teaching claiming one-fourth of the total applications from female candidates.

Table VI:5 Pattern of Job Applied For

Job Category	Female Respondents		Male Respondents	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Executive and Supervisory	9	19	34	55
Secretarial	15	33	8	13
Research Assistant	2	4	6	10
Librarian	6	13	1	2
Teaching	11	24	2	3
Technician	0	0	2	3
Others	3	7	9	14
TOTAL	46	100	62	100

Executive jobs also claimed about one-fifth of applications from females, but that is quite low as compared to over tions from male candidates for jobs in this category. Library jobs held the fourth place claiming one-eighth of applications in case of females. Thus most male graduates would first try for executive



jobs failing which they would look to other jobs, most likely the secretarial ones. As against 55 per cent of male graduates only 19 per cent of women graduates tried for executive jobs. Fifty seven per cent of the women graduates, on the other hand, tried for secretarial and teaching jobs together, of male graduates only 16 per cent applied for these jobs. [Thus a distinct segregation of job market seem to emerge from the supply side itself, males and female candidates showing distinctly different preferences for supply of their labour.]

#### Pattern of Present Jobs

The jobs in which the candidates actually get employed would, of course, depend not only the pattern of their applications, but also on the differences in selection procedures in different categories of jobs, as well as on the number of jobs available in each category. To a certain extent, the pattern of their jobs is in line with the pattern of their job search and applications. Secretarial and teaching jobs which claimed largest number (57%) of applications from female respondents are also the jobs in which most (66%) female workers are found to be employed. Rest of them are working as librarians (22%) and research assistants (11%). Among the males, the largest number (23%) are in secretarial jobs, 19 per cent in the self-employed entrepreneurial category, 15 per cent in teaching jobs, and 12 per cent each in executive and supervisory and the rest in other categories.

of jobs. The distribution of jobs in their case is not strictly in line with the pattern of applications. Secured jobs have larger proportion than applications in secretarial, teaching and research staff and smaller proportion in the executive and supervisory positions.

Women graduates got clustered in the secretarial, teaching, research and library jobs, which were also the jobs for which they had mostly applied. It seems that they are more realistic in the assessment of job availability and their own capabilities in respect of certain jobs. But around one-fifth of their applications were for executive and supervisory positions also, whereas none of the currently working respondent is in these jobs. No doubt, of the male graduates also only 12 per cent are in these jobs against 55 per cent applications. But women have no representative of them against one-fifth of their applications. In the selection procedure for these jobs, there thus appears to be an element of discrimination against women. Another repercussion that follows from the application and employment pattern is that the men having failed to secure jobs in the executive and supervisory categories for which most of them apply, switch over to the lower order jobs where proportion of female applications is relatively larger and women generally feel more certain of getting employment. But on account of the encroachment by men on these jobs, the probability of women getting jobs gets reduced. If the ratio of application to currently held jobs is any indication of the differences in selection, our data suggests discrimination here also. In teaching jobs of the



total applications 85 per cent were from women, for the total teaching jobs only 43 per cent are held by women. Similarly, 65 per cent of applications for secretarial jobs were from women, but they got only 23 per cent of the jobs. Thus pre-entry discrimination against educated women seems to be operating at two levels : (i) non-selection of women at higher cadre jobs; and (ii) discrimination in selection in the middle order jobs where women feel confident of performing the task, and there is no definite reason for preferring men.

#### Salary Differences

The male-female differentials in average salary are mostly on account of the differences in their job pattern and partly on account of the differences in salary rates owing to their employment with different employers and units. The differences are, however, found to be quite significant even in the limited sample we have of the employed graduates with similar qualifications (Table VI:6).

Table VI:6 Average Emoluments in the Current Job

Educational Qualifications	Earnings Per month (Rs)	
	Female	Male
B.A.	120	547.50
B.Sc.	-	830.00
M.A.	538	753.33
M.Sc.	827	850.00
Professional Degree	630	-
Others	-	633.33

Further, it is also seen that for the same period of working, the increase in earnings of female workers is much lower than of the male workers (Table VI:7).

Table VI:7 Increase in Emoluments

Period for which working in current job	% increase in emoluments	
	Female	Male
Upto 1 year	3.08	20.12
2-3 years	15.07	46.25
3-5 years	34.50	46.82
3 years or more	9.27	20.00

### Conclusion

Thus despite the facts that a large proportion of educated women do not enter labour market for various reasons, that they tend to apply mainly for certain kinds of jobs which they feel they could do and also that their chances of securing a job for which they generally apply are not very much different from those for men, there is enough evidence to suggest existence of discrimination against those of them who are seeking work and are employed. / Pre-entry discrimination is evident in their virtual elimination from most higher cadre jobs, and a lower selection application ratio than in case of men even in the middle order 'soft' jobs. And lower average earnings and slower rise in them as compared to men, clearly indicate post-entry discrimination against them.

## Chapter VII : Women Workers in the Informal Sector

It is well known that a large proportion of women workers, particularly the illiterate and uneducated and belonging to poor households, get employed in the informal sector. Some of them work as regular or casual employees in small establishments, but a large number of them work for households and as self-employed in various activities. Those in the former category have got already included in the main samples for the study : establishment sample and employees sample. In order that some idea is had of the women workers in the latter category, we decided to undertake small sample studies of three important categories of womenworkers : vegetable vendors, washerwomen and housemaids.\* The main purpose of these studies is to portray the socio-economic background and problems relating to the work of these groups of women workers. The issues of segregation and discrimination which form the central theme of the main study came up only in a limited way and mainly by way of implications. In all the three activities we have selected for study, men as well as women are found working, but our sample have been confined to the women workers only. But the aspects relating to the position of women workers vis a vis men workers have also been covered to a certain extent.

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\* Since the samples were rather small no detailed tables are presented. Instead most of the relevant information is described in the text. A table portraying certain comparative characteristics of the three groups of women workers is given as Appendix to the chapter.

### I. Vegetable Vendors

Women constitute around 30 per cent of the persons engaged in the trade of vegetable and fruit selling in Lucknow city. Most of the women work single-handed and sell vegetables at fixed locations. In large vegetable markets in different parts of the city, women vegetable sellers are mostly found to be selling a few items sitting on the pavements outside the main market. Obviously their turnover and incomes are much less as compared to their counterparts having permanent shops inside the regular market. In the latter category of shops a few women are found engaged, but mostly as helpers to their husbands or fathers who manage and look after the shops. A few women vegetable vendors sell vegetables moving from door to door, in wooden carts or in baskets carried on their heads. Most of the women vegetable sellers in our sample consist of those with fixed locations on the pavements.

A total of 26 vegetable vendors selected on a random basis from three vegetable markets of the city were covered in the survey. Their age distribution was in line with the general population of workers : 40 per cent were in the age group 20-35; and another 40 per cent in 35-50 years, 12 per cent were above 50 years of age while eight per cent were below 20 years. Their marital characteristics, however, were out of line with general population, in so far as though all were in the marriageable age group, only 58 per cent were married and living with their husbands while 31 per cent were widowed. Seven per cent were unmarried and four per cent had divorced their husbands. A significant



high per-centages of widows in the sample probably suggests that many women take up jobs like vegetable vending due to the adverse family circumstances.

In fact, 54 per cent of the respondents reported entering the trade on account of the economic compulsions due to family circumstances. Around half of them had to take up some work as their husbands died and they had to work to earn for their own livelihood and that of their families. In the case of another 31 per cent, however, the vegetable trade naturally came to them as the family occupation. A few, about 15 per cent, took up vegetable vending as they wanted to earn an independent income, to escape from maltreatment and harassment from their families. One of them, however, a young girl of 16 years was selling vegetables so as to meet the expenses of her education, which her family was not able to afford.

It is also noted that the women who were engaged in vegetable vending as a vocation handed down to them by their parents or parents-in-law, have generally been in the trade for longer period, over five years, while those having taken it up due to economic compulsions arising out of certain family circumstances, are in the trade only for a few years, mostly for less than three years. In fact, the latter group was out of labour force, and has entered the trade mostly after some years of their marriage. Therefore, the older women are not necessarily in the trade for longer years. Even most of those in the age group 50 years and above as well as those in the age group of



for  
20-50 years have been in this trade/only one to three years, while sixty per cent of those in the age group 20-25 years have been selling vegetables for at least three years and half of them for at least five years. Thus most of the women who did not have vegetable vending as family occupation are late entrants in the trade and seem to have been forced to work due to economic compulsions of their households.

Most women vegetable vendors have more than one earner in their households. Only 25 per cent of them have no other earner except themselves in the family, but one-third of these women, of course, have no family at all. Majority (58%) of the respondents had a family consisting of at least five members, and the average size of their family worked out to 4.38. Each family on an average had two earners; thus yielding an average dependency ratio of around 2.19. The respondents' families thus had, in general, one more earner besides the respondent, making a total of 50 earners in the 26 households. Twenty-six of them, the respondents themselves, of course, were engaged in vegetable vending; but another 19 of the workers from their families were also engaged in this trade, eight of them jointly with the respondents, and 11 independently. Only five respondents had one of the members of their families working in some other jobs : none of them had a regular job with any establishment; two engaged in tailoring, one in petty trade, one in farming and one was a casual labourer.

Thus vegetable vending is found to be the sole source of income in case of most of the households; and here the number of hands working

in this trade is found to result in larger than proportionate increase in the daily earnings. Most households derive an income of less than Rs.10 per day from this trade, only 27 per cent earn more than Rs.10 per day and 12 per cent more than Rs.15 per day. But the average earnings of a vegetable vendor working single-handed is Rs.4 per day; two workers jointly in the trade earn a total of Rs.8.50 and when there are three from the family engaged in the trade, their earnings total to Rs.11. With an average of two members engaged in the vegetable vending, average income of a household from this source comes to Rs.540 per month. Since larger families have some members working <sup>in</sup> other occupations, with higher average earnings, the household income rises more than proportionately with household size thus yielding a positive relationship between family size and per capita income. The relationship is, however, valid only upto the size of four, beyond which it tends to become negative. Thus the average income of the single member households is Rs.118 per month, that of a two-member households Rs.580 per month, of a three-member household Rs.901, and of a four-member household Rs.1250 per month. Average income of the larger households tends to get stabilised around Rs.1300.

Let us now look at the conditions, growth and problems of the trade faced by the women vegetable vendors. As noted earlier, while 31 per cent of our respondents entered this trade as a part of their family vocation, rest were compelled to enter it due to family circumstances. Most of them in the former category faced no problem when

they started working; but over four-fifths of those in the latter category reported having faced one or the other problem in starting their activity. Lack of funds, followed by non-availability of place to start business were the most often faced problems. A significant proportion, around 45 per cent of them, also reported having faced harassment from the vendors already operating in the vicinity. The tormentors were, however, more often female than male vendors!

Although, lack of funds and non-availability of space continue to be the major material problems the female vendors are facing even after being in the trade for some years, some of them, around one-fourth, and mostly those having one or two other members of the family working with them, feel that they do not have adequate hands to deal with the volume of business they could handle. Another important problem that is faced consists of their inability to keep long hours, in most cases due to household responsibilities, but in some cases also due to insecurity they face as women while working late. Harassment is reported by most vendors, but the most often mentioned source of harassment is the 'police'. This harassment generally is in the form of the attempts by police to drive the vendors away in order to clear the pavements where they are vending, and sometimes, also of demanding 'consideration', mostly monetary, to allow them to operate in the 'unauthorised' locations. Sometimes the vendors operate from the pavements of streets of residential areas, and in such cases, they have also reported frequent harassment from the residents of houses in front of which they are squatting to sell vegetables.

Most of the problems of the vegetable vendors, relating to space, insecurity and harassment are due to their operating in the open and, often, in unauthorised locations. One would, therefore, presume that provision of stalls in authorised vegetable markets could be an important solution to many of their problems. Such stalls are generally not available, and when available on rent fetch a considerable amount of pugree (premium), which has to be paid to the present occupant in order to have its use, besides, of course, the monthly rent that is to be paid to the Municipal Corporation. One of our respondents who acquired a stall paid Rs.500 as pugree to the earlier occupant. Sometimes, the vegetable vendors, with some material and manpower resources, has attempted to erect some structures of their own, probably on public land. But 24 out of 26 vendors have no stalls or structures and are operating on pavements and streets. Strangely, 40 per cent of them have no interest in acquiring a stall, probably because at the meagre level of turnover they operate they do not think they need it. Also they have an assured and captive clientele in the residential locality where they are operating. Rest of them who are interested in having a stall are not hopeful of getting one, due to the absolute non-availability in most cases, and due to non-availability of funds to procure one, in other cases. Thus in the given situation, there does not seem any significant chance of these vendors acquiring a secure and authorised place for their activity.

## II. Washerwomen

Cloth washing activity has three major segments in an Indian city like Lucknow. A part of the activity is carried out in registered



shops, located in the main shopping centres and locality markets. These shops mainly undertake the dry cleaning of woollen and silk garments, and, to a limited extent, washing of cotton cloths. They use hired labour, machines, particularly for the dry cleaning work and electrically operated iron for pressing the clothes. The other segment consists of washermen carrying out their business with the use of family labour. They use their residences as their business premises, but wash cloths on the banks of the river flowing through the city or other water sources like tanks, and dry them on temporary lining in vacant plots in and around their locality. Most of them collect and deliver cloths from and to households. Major part of cotton cloth washing is carried out by these washermen households, who do not use any machines. Those of them who have electric connection at their residences may use electrically operated iron press, but most of them use coke-heated iron. The third segment of this trade consists of washermen who undertake only ironing of cloths. Lack of enough hands to carry out washing and resources to procure whatever little material and equipment is required to undertake washing of cloths, is one reason for their confining their activity to ironing only. Increasing washing charges, on the one hand, and emergence of easily washable synthetics and of detergents thus making washing a less disagreeable activity, on the other, have led households to increasingly undertake their washing themselves. They, however, find it more convenient to get ironing done by washermen. These factors have led to an increase in the number of 'ironing only'



variety of washermen, who visit the households with a wheeled wooden handcarts and coke-heated iron presses to cater to this need.

Our sample is confined to the second and the third category of washerwomen. It may be noted that although our respondents were women, they carried out their work mostly jointly with the male members of their households. Unlike in vegetable vending where most women were the principal earners and heads of household, the women workers in cloth-washing trade were mostly members of the household team and headed the households only in a few cases. It would, however, be completely wrong to infer from this difference that women in vegetable trade are better placed, than the washerwomen as the former are 'independent' and have the status of the head of their household. The fact is that most women vegetable vendors are forced to enter the labour market and vegetable trade by the economic compulsions of their circumstances, while washerwomen, in most cases, has been the obvious and willing partners of the male members of their households, in their family occupation.

Among the 25 washerwomen selected by us for our study from three different localities of the town, around three-fourths are married and living with their husbands almost all of whom work together with their wives in cloth washing. Three aged below 20 years, were not married. Sixteen per cent were widows and there was no divorcee as against 35 per cent widows and divorcees among the vegetable vendors. Were these widows forced to take up cloth washing due to their family circumstances,

as happened in the case of vegetable vendors? We find that death of the husband did compel one of them to work, but all other washerwomen are in the trade 'naturally' as this happens to be the traditional occupation of their families : 96 per cent of the washerwomen are in this category, including 24 per cent young ones, below 25 years of age and 12 per cent aged, above 50 years of age.

It is for the above reason that we find that our respondents have been engaged in the clothwashing activity for durations more or less in line with their age : one-fourth of them are below 20 years of age and have been working for an average of seven years, another 28 per cent who are in the age group 20-35 years have been in the trade for a period of 10 to 20 years and those in the age group 35-40, the largest group constituting about 40 per cent are in the trade for over 20 years each.

Two of the three aged 50 years or more have been working as washerwomen for over 30 years each. Only one respondent, aged 50 years and above, has been engaged in clothwashing for a relatively smaller period of above seven years as she entered the trade only after the death of her husband.

As noted earlier, most washerwomen are working jointly with other members of their families in most cases males and as well as females. Only four women who are widows were working single-handed. Sixty four per cent had one or two other members working with them; and 20 per cent had three or more family members joining hands with them in cloth washing. It is interesting to note that except the 16 per cent who were

working singly, all had at least one male member in their working team. Besides, those who were working jointly with the respondents, households of 40 per cent respondents also had members engaged in clothwashing separately from them, mostly one person from each of such households.

Thus clothwashing constituted the sole or major activity of the households of the washerwomen. The 25 sample households had a total population of 112 persons, of which 88 were found working, yielding a participation rate of 78.57 per cent. Such a high participation rate was particularly due to most of the children working in the family trade. Of the 55 persons below the age of 15 in the sample households, as many as 30 were found working. The total workers of the sample households were distributed as follows : 86 per cent in clothwashing, and 14 per cent in other occupations. Those in the other occupations were working as clerks (40%), peons (40%) and labourers (20%).

With a high worker-population ratio, the households of the washerwomen are in a position to earn an average monthly income of Rs.552.84, yielding a per capita income of Rs.122.85. This level of per capita income could be considered sufficient for meeting the minimum subsistence requirements of the households in Lucknow city in 1981.

What is important to note is that most families, around 70 per cent, have an income of over Rs.400 per month; and, larger the family size, higher is the income of the household. No household has less than

three members. Around one-fourth have three members, and with average income of Rs.358, they have a per capita income of Rs.119. Another 28 per cent have four members each, and an average income of Rs.511, yielding a per capita income of Rs.128 per month. Households with five or more members constituted 45 per cent, have an average income of Rs.605 and a per capita income of Rs.121.

A significant part of the household income, however, is derived from activities other than clothwashing. Although only 11 per cent of the working members of these households are engaged in these activities, 37 per cent of the total household income is earned by members engaged in the activities other than clothwashing. Income from clothwashing estimates to Rs.11.62 per day, or Rs.349 per month, while the total household income on an average estimates to Rs.552.84. Clothwashing thus turn out to be a relatively low-earning activity as compared even to the lowest paid regular jobs like that of a peon or labourer, in which most of the members not in clothwashing, are employed.

Those working singly naturally are earning less than those having help from other family members in clothwashing. But the increase is not proportional to the number of hands. Two persons together earn more than double (Rs.11.44) of what a single worker earns (Rs.4.88), but with three persons working the earnings increase only to Rs.12.31, with four persons to Rs.15.33 and with five persons to Rs.15.90. It is thus seen the additional hands beyond two mostly share the work which two persons are already performing, and these



additional hands mostly consist of children. The relationship between value of equipment possessed by washerwomen and their daily earnings is, however, found stronger, than between number of hands engaged and earnings. On an average they have equipment worth Rs.600 in the form of iron presses, lining and sometimes, handcarts, 48 per cent who have equipment worth Rs.400 or less, earn around Rs.8 per day. Those with equipment worth between Rs.400 and Rs.700 earn Rs.13 per day. In the equipment slab of Rs.750-1000, earnings rise to Rs.16 and beyond Rs.1000, Rs.19. In spite of the fact that all operations involved in clothwashing trade are carried out manually making it a highly labour intensive activity, it is somewhat surprising that earnings rise more consistently with equipment possessed rather than the number of workers engaged. Although a few of the respondents possessed a handcart, thus raising the total value of their equipment, in most cases the difference in equipment in use, consisted of that between the coke-heated and electric iron presses, the latter being three to four times costlier than the former. An iron press seems to contribute to higher net earnings in two ways : by reducing the time required in heating and by reducing the cost of material required for heating. This is found to account largely for the differences in earnings falling in line with the value of equipment.

More important determinant of the differences in earnings is, however, found in undertaking a single process, washing, or ironing, and a combination of both. There were only two respondents in the sample



who undertake washing only, for the laundries and chikan embroiders, on a large scale basis. They earn the highest Rs.14 per day. Their earnings are high because they work for establishments and on a larger scale. Most of the remaining respondents undertake both washing and ironing for households and earn Rs.12.56 per day. Around 16 per cent, women working singly, undertake ironing only, as they do not have the necessary human and other resources, required to undertake both washing and ironing. And their earnings are the lowest at Rs.6 per day.

In most (84%) cases, however, as noted earlier, the respondent women workers have other members of their families working with them and in each of such case there is at least one male member working with them. But there seems to be a general pattern of division of labour among the male and female members. Washing is done jointly by both sexes in most cases, but in 20 per cent cases it is done by males only and in 10 per cent cases by women only. Collection and delivery of garments to households is mostly done by males, or by females accompanied by males. Ironing of cloths seems a predominantly female domain, and account-keeping is almost equally shared by men and women. Thus it looks that processes dealing with customers are more often performed by men; the most crucial process, washing involving muscular strength is equally shared by men and women, while relatively less exerting and somewhat skilled activity of ironing is performed mostly by women. On the whole the clothwashing seems to be a trade where the men and women hold equal places without any subordination of one sex by the other.

In general, the washermen report no material problem in carrying out their trade. None finds lack of business due to competition as a constraint, but around one-third of them feel constrained by lack of hands in coping with the business that comes to them. That they have to go a long distance for washing the cloths poses a problem to 28 per cent. Problems specifically relating to women workers, however, seem important. In the first instance, around one-fourth of the respondents cannot work long due largely to the reasons of household duties. Second, over half the respondents find harassment from customers, as a problem in their work. They feel that the customers tend to bully them, more often than their male co-workers, taking the pretext of poor quality of work, delays in delivery and over-charging, and the male customers sometimes try to take undesirable advantages assuming them to be women of easy virtue. While most of the women workers working singly have their problem, half of the washerwomen working jointly with the male members of their families are faced <sup>with</sup> similar situation. It is probably for this reason that the task of collection and delivery of cloths is undertaken either by male members, or by female members accompanied by the male members of the households.

Although women can perform all the tasks involved in clothwashing trade as well as men, it does not seem to be suitable for them to carry out without the help of men. Women working singly are found unable to undertake all the processes, and thus confine themselves to a single process which yields them rather low earnings. Insecurity resulting from the necessity of going outdoor for washing and relative

weakness in dealing with the customer households, create further problems for them in working without help from the male members of their households. Yet women contribute around 50 per cent of the workers in clothwashing trade in the non-establishment sector. May be, that is also one of the reasons, in the absence of any lack of demand for the service, for the relatively low earnings in this trade, as compared even to the lowest paid jobs in establishments.

### III. Maid Servants

Domestic servants are engaged by households in the urban areas to undertake household tasks which the housewives are unable to perform either due to personal or physical reasons or due to the lack of time. Such tasks include utensils and floor cleaning, washing of cloths, cooking and outdoor tasks such as purchase of vegetables and other sundry items and accompanying the children to school and back. Requirements as well as capacity of the households differ so that the domestic servants are engaged for different combination of these activities by different families. They are employed mostly for specific tasks each day, rather than on a regular full-time basis to perform any task the household may assign. Still, a significant percentage, around 20, of the maid servants surveyed by us were found to be employed on a regular basis. Rest of them perform a few specified tasks for more than one household.

Besides the shift in pattern of employment of domestic servants, from that of whole-time service with a household on a regular basis to the

task-specific engagement of part-time workers, two other, rather conflicting trends have influenced their demand, of late. The rising cost of living has reduced the capacity of the middle class households to engage help for household chores. At the same time, increasing trend in the number of housewives seeking jobs out of homes in order to supplement the dwindling real income of the household, has led to an increase in the need for domestic help. Whether the housewife should take up a job or not gets decided, largely by the comparison between the net earnings from the job and wages required to be paid to the additional help needed for household work in the event of her taking up the job. Imponderables like the sacrifice of motherly care to the children, of course, add to the cost side, and that like self-fulfilment on the part of the housewife in undertaking a job, to the benefit side.

By and large, only the households beyond a particular level of income engage servants even on a part-time, specific task basis. In our sample of 25 maid servants we find that none is engaged by households with an income less than Rs.1200 per month; and around two-thirds by households with a monthly income above Rs.2000. Average income of the employer households estimates to around Rs.2300 per month. Structurally, these households have a low ratio of housewives to population 56 per cent of them had one housewife each, 24 per cent two housewives, and 20 per cent had no housewife. The population of the households employing domestic servants of our sample, had



38 per cent workers, 21 per cent housewives, and 41 per cent children. Twentyeight per cent of the women in the working age group were employed, thus reducing the proportion of housewives. Thus a reasonably high level of income combined with the low housewife-population ratio makes for the demands for domestic servants.

Most domestic servants, particularly those on part-time basis are women; in the two different localities of Lucknow city, from where we drew our sample of 25 maid servants, women are estimated to constitute around 75 per cent of the domestic servants engaged by all households. Around 70 per cent of the household members also expressed their preference for women as maid servants. Though the male members of the employer households were somewhat more inclined in favour of male servants - only 44 per cent of them preferred female servants - 88 per cent of the female members of the employer households preferred women; and their preference seems to have prevailed more often. On the scores of capacity for hard work and to undertake errands out of home, the men were preferred for domestic help; but women, according to the employers, were preferable because they were generally more efficient, and yet, are available at low wages. That they are more patient and submissive and less prone to endanger the security of the house were also mentioned as additional considerations in favour of women as servants. That they abstain from work frequently, require protection if needed to work at odd hours and keep asking for various things from time to time were mentioned as the problems in employing



female servants. Yet, overall, the women were preferred to men for domestic help, primarily, it looks, for the reason that they are available at low wages.

Basic reason as to why the women who work as domestic servants, undertake this work which has very low status, and accept low wages, seem to lie in the desperate situation of their households. Almost all of them belong to families with no or very little income from any other source. In our sample, we find that one-third of the maid servants are widows and divorcees, driven to take up any work for their livelihood, as there is no other earner in the family. Married maidservants living with their husbands constitute 48 per cent, while 20 per cent are unmarried. They are distributed evenly among the different age group : 20 per cent each are in the age groups below 20 years and above 50 years, while 36 per cent are aged between 20 and 35 years and 32 per cent between 35 and 50 years.

The employment and dependency situation of the households of the maid servants is apparently quite favourable. Of their total population 50 per cent are earning and the other 50 per cent were non-earning dependents. Only 20 per cent of the maid servants have no other earner in their families; 56 per cent had two or three and 24 per cent four or five earners, including the respondent. With 2.5 earners on an average, the total household income turns out to be around Rs.527 per month, which, given an average family size of five members yields a per capita income of Rs.105 per month. This

situation obviously is the result of the low earnings in the domestic jobs in which most workers from the respondent household are engaged. The workers of the households of maid servants, besides themselves, are engaged in various activities as follows : 35 per cent in domestic service; 38 per cent in labour as peons, factory workers, or salesmen, and 27 per cent are self-employed as rickshaw puller, mechanic, tailor etc. Earnings of those engaged as wage labourers average to around Rs.300, of self-employed Rs.200 and domestic servants to Rs.180. Of the total workers including the respondents, 61 per cent are engaged as domestic servants, 23 per cent as wage labourers and 16 per cent are self-employed in various activities.

Let us now turn to the work of the maid servants. There are 20 per cent of them who work for a single household each, while 60 per cent are working for five or more households at the same time and 20 per cent for two or three households. Those working for a single household, of course, perform all kinds of domestic chores including some errands out of home. Most of those working for less than five households are also performing three or four tasks for each of them. These tasks include utensils cleaning, floor cleaning, clothwashing and some odd outdoor errands. Most of those working for five or more households, however, undertake only utensils cleaning for each of them. In all, one-fourth undertake single activity, utensil cleaning; 44 per cent combine two or three activities and 32 per cent four or more activities for the households they work for.

Obviously, larger number of households served and larger number of activities implies large hours of work. Yet around two-thirds of the maid servants do not work for more than eight hours, in fact, 44 per cent work for less than six hours. It must, however, be noted that these hours constitute the period of regular and intensive work with very close supervision - most of the time the housewife watching and goading the maids to work fast and better. Thirty six per cent of them work for over eight hours; 20 per cent of them who work for over 10 hours are, of course, the full-time regular servants. Earnings are consistently related with hours worked. Those working upto six hours earn Rs.130 per month, 6-8 hours of work per day fetches a monthly earning of Rs.169, and 8-10 hours work Rs.237 per month. The earnings of those working for more than 10 hours are less at Rs.212, but as regular employees of the households, they also receive certain benefits other than the salary. Any kind benefits that the maidservants receive, such as tea, meals, cloths etc., are included, in terms of their monetary value, in the monthly earnings reported above.

The women working as maidservants do not seem to have any alternative prospects in view. Only changes in their status can come with the male members of their families getting higher paid jobs, in which case they would just stop working and look after their households. Around one-third of them have been working as maidservants for over 10 years, another 20 per cent for five to ten years, 30 per cent each for two to five, and for less than two years. In most cases, their money earnings have increased over the years. Those



working for over 10 years had a five-fold increase in their earnings during the period of their working as maidservants, those working for 2 to 10 years also had an increase of around 150 per cent and even those with only two years as their period of work had gained 50 per cent in their earnings. Around three-fourths of them seem to have resigned to their fate and have no aspirations for a change. Those who aspire for a change, also do not have highly paid jobs in mind. Most of them have work relating to child care and baby sitting in view. A few would like to have a sewing machine to start their own tailoring business, or a job in a factory.

The labour market for maidservants seem to in some kind of equilibrium with strong stability conditions. Their demand in the urban areas rises mainly as a result of more and more housewives taking up employment out of their homes. But since even the latter do not get jobs with relatively high salaries, the process of taking up jobs by them slows down to the extent the difference between what they earn and what the households have to pay as wages of maidservants is not significant. This prevents a substantial rise in demand for maidservants; but low wages of maidservants, on the other hand, also keep their demand from falling. To the extent, however, employment of women from the middle class households is experiencing an increasing trends and the technology of household work is not undergoing any swift change, a larger number of domestic servants would be employed. And most of the time they would be women, for they are available at a lower wage than men. Supply of such women workers is not constrained as a sizeable

proportion of urban families are very poor and their women have no inhibitions in undertaking domestic work in other households. There also does not seem any appreciable chance of upward occupational mobility of women from these classes, as their educational levels are low. Therefore, they will continue to supply their labour to other households at low wages. A general rise in their wages without an adverse effect on their employment prospects seems highly dependent on the substantial increase in the employment of women in better paid jobs, in general and of the women belonging to employer households, in particular.



AppendixSOME CHARACTERISTICS OF SAMPLE GROUPS

	Vegetable Vendors (Sample = 26)	Washer- women (Sample = 25)	Maid servants (Sample = 25)
<hr/>			
<u>I Age Structure</u>			
< 20 years	2	6	4
20-35 years	10	7	9
35-50 years	10	9	8
50 years or more	4	3	4
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<u>II Marital Status</u>			
Never married	2	3	5
Married	15	18	12
Widowed	8	4	6
Divorced	1	0	2
<hr/>			
<u>III Family Structure</u>			
Average Family Size	4.38	4.56	4.96
Earners : Total	1.92	3.52	2.52
: in respondents' trade	1.73	3.04	1.76
: Elsewhere	0.27	0.48	0.76
Earners/Total Members Ratio	0.44	0.77	0.51
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	Vegetable Vendors	Washer- Women	Maid servants
<hr/>			
IV <u>Average Household Income (Rs. per month)</u>			
Total	750	553	527
from respondents' occupation	467	349	317
Per Capita	194	122	106
<hr/>			
V <u>Average Earnings (Rs. per month)</u>			
Respondents	270	116	180
Family Members in other occupations	350	408	412
<hr/>			
VI <u>Number of years in trade</u>			
< 5 years	19	3	12
5-10 years	4	4	5
10-20 years	3	7	6
20 years or more	0	11	2
<hr/>			
VII <u>Circumstances in which entered trade</u>			
Traditional family occupation	8	24	2
Compulsion due to family problems	14	1	22
Desire to be independent	4	0	1
<hr/>			
VIII <u>Work-related Problems</u> (frequency of responses)			
General (lack of funds, help, space etc)	37	19	10
Specific to their being women	31	16	18
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## Chapter VIII : Conclusion

Labour market segregation and discrimination, though conceptually two distinct phenomena are in practice found to be closely inter-related. Segregation most of the time is caused and fostered by discriminatory practices in the labour market; and, segregation established on whatever basis, is found to provide apparent justification for discrimination. In ultimate analysis, the basic socio-economic factors causing the two phenomena are found to be the same. It is, therefore, difficult to analytically separate them and, for that reason, the various hypotheses advanced to explain the two phenomena are common and interactive as can be seen from the following four propositions which broadly represent the various strands of thinking on these issues.

- i) In their efforts to maximise returns, as postulated in neoclassical economic theory, the employers minimise costs by not employing certain categories of workers who, they believe, are less productive; or by employing them only at lower wages; or, maximise their psychic returns by treating discrimination as a consumer good.
- ii) Certain jobs are socially stigmatised as 'inferior' in which workers belonging to certain disadvantaged categories only tend to go, and thus job-worker stigmatisation leading to segregation of labour markets gets established.
- iii) The labour market has a dualistic structure : certain groups of workers are virtually denied entry into some jobs and activities due

to institutionalisation of such barriers as norms and procedures of recruitment, internalisation of labour markets etc.

iv) Segregation and discrimination in labour market are essential features of the capitalist forms of production, organisations, and are necessary for the survival of capitalism to the extent they help in preservation of power in the hands of the dominant group, on the one hand, and in keeping the reserve army swelling so as to keep wages from rising and surplus value from falling, on the other.

Each of these hypotheses has also been applied to the questions of segregation and discrimination of women in labour markets, either singly or in combination with each other. The more recent examination has, however, relied more on the structural, rather than the neo-classical hypotheses. Theoretically, it is possible to build up explanatory frameworks based on one or more of these hypotheses; but in practice, it is extremely difficult to disentangle the numerous, interrelated factors, causing discrimination and segregation of women, in any employment situation. We have, therefore, adopted a basically empirical approach in the present study, keeping, of course, the various propositions advanced above in view.

The overall low proportion of women in employment and the consequent predominance of men in most occupations and activities, as is found the case in the situation studied by us, is primarily a reflection of societal and economic-organisational factors which tend to restrict the supply of female labour. ) While these phenomena do reflect



a form of societal discrimination in relegating women away from productive roles, and an element of segregation by adhering to the traditional, none-too rational, sexual division of labour, they do not provide direct evidence of discrimination against women in the labour market. [Segregation and discrimination by sex is directly indicated by differential achievements by men and women who enter the labour markets, in terms of their respective chances of securing jobs, placement in better paid and higher status jobs, earnings, promotions and other aspects of employment.] The previous chapters of this study have attempted an examination of these questions. In this chapter we recapitulate the important findings and attempt to draw some general conclusions in respect of women's employment in the urban areas in a developing country like India.

#### Some Characteristics of Working Women : Factors For Entry Into Labour Market

Going out to seek jobs for wages and salaries is still an exceptional rather than common characteristic of female population in an urban situation in India. That is why we find a very low proportion of women in employment (in the situation studied by us it is 10 per cent). Even among the college educated, majority have no intention of entering the employment market.) The two categories of women who generally go out to work are : one, belonging to the economically depressed groups amongst whom work to supplement the low family income is a compulsion; and two, from the relatively better off and 'modernised' households in which women have some notion of independence, equality and attainment.



Majority of women workers belong to the first category, though a rising trend is perceptible among those belonging to the second category.

A few characteristics of women workers revealed by our study tend to strongly support the hypothesis that most women in an Indian city work due to economic compulsion. First the households with women workers have much higher participation rates but hardly better per capita income levels. This phenomenon suggests that of the households which have their women members working, men as well as women work in low earnings jobs. Our study of women workers in the unorganised sectors provides evidence to support the economic compulsion hypothesis more directly. In fact, a sizeable proportion of women engaged in vegetable vending and domestic service are driven to work out of desperate economic situation. Second, a larger proportion of women workers than of male workers enter employment market rather early in their life and without much of education. We found that 40 per cent of the sample women workers started working before they were 20, and 60 per cent before they could attain education beyond secondary school. Thus it seems that the most of the women who go out to work cannot afford to lose time or to attain educational qualifications due to their family circumstances.

Third, the same reasons which compel women to enter employment market, also make it difficult to withdraw from it despite increasing household responsibilities. As a result, only a few women workers,

particularly belonging to relatively better off households discontinue work, after marriage, as generally hypothesised, to look after their households, and for the reasons of births and care of children. In the case of most of the urban women workers in the situation studied by us, marriage and children do not necessarily lead to the withdrawal from labour force; in fact, they may increase the necessity of remaining in employment to fulfill the increased income requirements of the household.<sup>1</sup> There is some evidence to the effect, however, that entry in employment market tends to postpone the marriage of women workers, as over two-fifths of the sample women workers in the age group 20-35 were unmarried, although the average age at marriage for the urban women is estimated at 19 years. So far as the women workers in the informal sector activities studied by us are concerned, a special characteristic regarding their marital status was a high proportion of widows particularly among the vegetable vendors and maidservants, which again emphasised their socio-economic plight which has driven them to work in low-earnings, low-status jobs.

Fourth, despite the fact that only a few women offer themselves in the employment market, the unemployment rate is found higher among them

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<sup>1</sup> Some evidence suggesting increasing participation in economic activity with larger number of children was found by the author in an earlier study of women workers in urban informal sector in India. See, Papola T.S. in Anker, Buvinic and Youssef (Eds), Women's Roles and Population Trends in the Third World, op.cit. p.272.

than men. This conclusion is suggested by our study of recent graduates, in which we found that even though less than half the female graduates were either employed or seeking work, whereas of the male graduates all were in the job market, of the former over half were unemployed while among the latter one-fifth were unemployed. And a common presumption that unemployment amongst women is mostly a result of their being highly selective in job choice as they could afford to wait, and therefore, it is more voluntary than real, is not found valid in the case of women graduates we studied. They were willing to take any kind of job as the unemployed did not necessarily belong to the better off families which could afford to wait till the jobs with specially likeable attributes became available.

Fifth, despite the majority of women workers having entered the labour market out of economic compulsion, and their having no strong likes and dislikes for jobs of different kinds, their occupational mobility is found very much limited as compared to men. Over two-thirds of the women employees of establishments tried only one job and stuck to it. Of those who tried for and/or worked in some jobs earlier, the earlier jobs were similar to the present one in two-thirds cases. Another interesting feature of the job history of male and female workers is that while most men gave up earlier jobs for better jobs, the women workers, when they gave up some jobs, did so basically because of household reasons of change of place of

of husband/parents, or then the work they were engaged in was of intermittent or temporary nature and they had to leave on its completion.

### Labour Market Segregation

In the situation of a overwhelmingly predominant male labour force, it is difficult to come across a distinct pattern of segregation in the labour market. While a large number of occupations may be employing only men, and hardly any women, this situation reflects the overall dominance of the proportion of men in the total workforce rather than the characteristic of these jobs as exclusive male preserves. This is the condition that prevails in the situation that we have studied. And what, therefore, we have to try to examine is whether there are occupations and jobs which tend to employ a much larger proportion of women than are found in the total workforce. For, if in a predominantly male situation, some jobs are found to be employing a large proportion of workers, a tendency towards segregation in favour of women could be postulated.

In the employment structure in Lucknow city and of the selected sample establishments, no strong tendency of segregation is visible on the whole. Men contribute major part of the workforce in all occupations and activities and women workers, though small in number, are also found to be working in most of the 100 occupational categories as given in Census of India 1971. There are only two occupations in which over one-third of workers are women, as against six



per cent in total. These occupations are nursing, and teaching. Some other occupations which show a tendency of attracting larger than average proportion of women workers, as revealed by the data from sample establishments are : stenographers, clerks and typists, telephone operators, sales workers, and production process workers in electronics, embroidery and food processing. On the other hand, higher grade jobs in practically all lines of activities and occupations have much lower than average proportion of women workers; and, to that extent, a degree of vertical segregation in favour of men also seems in operation. These tendencies of horizontal and vertical segregation in employment, even though not very strong, were also found supported by the pattern of recruitment by establishments in the recent past.

Segregation in employment may take place because the employers consider either male or female workers only as suitable for certain jobs; and/or because only men or only women try for certain jobs. The responses and evidence that we received in our study do not suggest very strong possibilities of segregation on either score. In majority of establishments, employers felt that most jobs could be performed by both men and women. One of the largest occupations, clerical and secretarial, was considered by all employers as equally well performed by men and women. There are, however, quite a few occupations which, they thought, could be performed by men only, or at least, better by men than women. These were executive and supervisory jobs in manufacturing, transport, and theatres, out-of-



sales jobs, and production process jobs in most manufacturing lines except in electronics, embroidery and food processing. It is significant to note that the public sector employers more often consider men and women equally suitable for most jobs than private employers who, in most cases, would consider women inferior or not suitable at all, for a number of these jobs. In certain cases where the latter category of employers consider women more suitable, e.g. in some production process lines or in schools, the two most important reasons given are better efficiency and availability at lower wages. It looks that segregation in favour of women in certain occupations may get stronger so long as they are available at lower wage rates, though men could also perform the jobs equally well. Lower productivity is not reported as an important reason for not employing women, the attitude of other employees turns out the major reason in most cases. The latter factor has serious adverse implications for the employment of women. Since there are no or very few women in most occupations, women are not likely to be employed in future also as the workforce is predominantly male and has certain, rather unfavourable attitude towards women co-workers. Therefore, most jobs may become out-of-bonds for women; and a complete segregation in favour of men might emerge.

So far as the segregation arising out of the male and female workers' own preferences and dislikes for certain kinds of jobs is concerned, while women may not prefer certain jobs, to the extent preferred jobs are not available, and men are willing to enter jobs which women

prefer, segregation by sex is unlikely to emerge. Women do not try generally for 'muscular' or 'outgoing' kinds of jobs, but men are willing, if not as keen as women, to take up clerical, stenographic, and teaching jobs for which women have a definite preference. No doubt, 50 per cent of the jobs applied for by women workers from establishments and 57 per cent by the women graduates, were only in two categories, secretarial and teaching; and of the jobs applied by male workers of establishments were more widely distributed and of those applied for by male graduates 55 per cent jobs were in the executive and supervisory categories. But then women as well as men had applied for practically all categories of jobs, and have taken up a less preferred one if the first choice did not become available. For example, men applied for higher jobs in larger proportion than women, but ultimately settled for clerical and teaching jobs for which most women had applied. Thus the pattern of jobs tried for by men and women suggests only a difference in preference, and does not necessarily result in occupational segregation by sex. What is evident is a clustering of women workers in certain kinds of jobs, namely, secretarial, teaching, telephone operator, a few production process jobs, and of course, nursing. The last occupation is also a case of clear segregation in favour of women, but in all others men are also to be found in large numbers, mostly in majority.

#### Pre-entry Discrimination

The low proportion of women in employment can be taken as a reflection of overall societal discrimination, and the difference between

the proportion of women in population and that in employment, as a crude measure of such discrimination. This overall disadvantage of women is, however, composed of two elements : the differential supply of labour by men and women, and differential treatment of men and women job seekers by the employers and the labour market. While it is true that a major part of the disadvantaged position of women in employment is a result of the former phenomenon, we find that labour market also adds to it significantly through discriminatory practice of the employers. In the situation that we have studied women have in employment only one-third of the share that can be considered their due on the basis of their share in population. Of this total disadvantage, according to our estimate, around 70 per cent is attributable to supply factors and 30 per cent to the labour market discrimination.

Discrimination in recruitment operative in the labour market is manifest in the lower selection-to-application ratio in case of women (0.028) than of men (0.035), suggesting a 25 per cent lower chance of a women applicant getting selected than that of a male applicant. The moot question here is : despite the explicit non-permissibility of discrimination by sex how does it take place? The employers in most cases plead absence of any bias in favour of men in relation to women of similar qualifications and capabilities. But even when we consider a sample of college educated applicants in which male and female applicants have more or less similar educational attainments and both groups are fresh entrants in the

labour market, the difference of similar extent is found; the selection-application ratio is 0.387 for male and 0.304 for female applicants.

Is there something inherent in the processes of selection and recruitment which results in a bias against women? It is found that women candidates stood better chances of selection when the formal methods such as written tests and personal interviews were used, and worse than men when recruitments were made informally through contacts, and recommendations.] In fact, they scored best when personal interviews only were used, though some employers tend to think that the women candidates are better than men in 'paper qualifications', but could not perform as well as men in tests and interviews. It may be noted that formal methods are mostly used by public sector establishments or large private sector ones, but most women seek jobs in private and small establishments.

It seems that no conscious bias against women is present in the process of recruitment in general. Yet a larger proportion of women candidates than men get eliminated from the process. It, therefore, seems that some unconscious and invisible bias operates at different stages of selection, which works against women without making the selection process overtly unfair and discriminatory. The major reason for such a bias in the minds of employers, who are mostly men, seems to lie in their belief that women are secondary workers, they have to look after households and, therefore, jobs



are needed by and should be given first to men. These notions which were expressed by majority of employers when asked as to why only a small proportion of their workforce consists of women, are firmly rooted in their minds and influence their decisions, at least on the margin, when a choice is to be made between equally qualified men and women.

### Post-entry Discrimination

Discrimination against women after they succeed in securing employment manifests itself in three interrelated phenomena : placement of women workers in the low-earning, low-prospects jobs; lower earnings of women than men in similar jobs; and slower advancement in career and low life-time earnings of women than men.

The occupation and activity-wise distribution of male and female workers amply demonstrates the women's disadvantage in placement in different kinds of jobs : most of them are clustered in low-earning jobs and in low-wage sectors. Most of the time they occupy positions which hardly are in the central hierarchy of organisation with a line for advancement. A significantly negative relationship is found between the proportion of women in the workforce and average earnings level, among different occupations and activities. The only sector which shows somewhat different characteristic is public administration, which employs above average proportion of women and also has above average level of earnings.



Wage discrimination in terms of different wages for men and women workers in similar occupations and jobs is, however, absent in the case of employees of establishments, except in the construction sector where women are paid lower than men, as, accordingly to the employers, they are available at lower wages. Yet women workers earn, on the whole, lower than men. Average monthly earnings of sample employees of establishments are Rs.721 for men and Rs.597 for women and differences are found in the same pattern, with larger or smaller degree in different occupations and sectors. Also, of the female employees 57 per cent earned less than Rs.500, eight per cent above Rs.1000 per month; among the male employees the respective percentages were 43 and 14. One reason for this difference could be that male workers are more often in time-scale of pay with certain other benefits, than men. In the present case, this does not seem a significant factor, as a similar proportion of men and women employees are on time-scale of pay. But there is significant difference between the male and female employees in terms of the starting points in their pay scales. Around 45 per cent of women employees had a pay scale starting below Rs.300 and three per cent at Rs.500 or more; of the male employees the two groups represented 28 and 12 per cent respectively.

Strangely enough, education seems to widen rather than narrow down the male-female earnings differences. Among the illiterates and those with little education, women employees have somewhat higher earnings than men; with secondary education men score over women, and

the relative difference in favour of men rises steeply with college education. Similar relationship is observed between years in service and earnings. Average earnings are higher for women than for men among those with less than two years in service, in most jobs. But with greater length of service men have higher earnings than women. It is also interesting to note that while factors such as educational qualifications, years in service, and economic background of the household, influence earnings of employees positively, the degree of influence of these variables is higher in the case of male than of the female employees. Thus the additive influence of the factors expected to influence wages is less pronounced in the case of women than of men.

Age-earnings relationship reveals a clear disadvantage to women employees. Age-earnings profile of both male and female employees yield a generally linear relationship between the two variables, though an exponential tendency is perceptible towards the higher ranges, in the case of men. The regression line for the age-earnings relationship among male employees lies not only considerably above that for women employees, but the distance between the two also increases with age. This is true whether we consider all employees together, or those holding university degree only. Thus the women workers not only earn lower than men currently at similar age levels, but the rate of rise in their earnings with age is significantly lower than of the male employees.

One of the reasons for slow rise in earnings is the relative lack of promotion prospects in the case of women workers. We found that of the promotions that were given to employees in the sample establishments in the recent past only 11 per cent went to women employees though they constituted 15 per cent of the total workforce. While one out of two male employees in the sample had received a promotion during his career, among women employees one out of six had had any promotion. Further, of those promoted, a male employee had to put in a smaller period of service than a female employee, before getting promoted; and the advantage in earnings on promotion was also higher in case of the female employees. For the disadvantage of women employees in terms of promotions, two reasons seem to be primarily response : One, the kind of jobs and establishments most women work in, have no regular line of jobs of different orders : stenographers, school teachers, telephone operators etc., are jobs from which one rarely moves into higher positions and the small private sector organisations in which most women work do not have a well-defined and elaborate vertical structure of organisation. Two, as seen earlier, in most cases, the employers do not consider women suitable for higher jobs particularly in the executive and supervisory categories into which most of the promotions take place.

So far as the differential treatment of women workers at the work place is concerned, the evidence points towards a fair degree of equality. Most women employees feel that they get the same treatment as their male counterparts. Most of those who found treated differentially

considered the treatment rather favourable, and a small number unfavourable. Similarly most women employees did not face any unpleasant situation vis a vis their employers, supervisors and co-workers. Of those who did face such a situation, reported that in most cases the reason was either related to work routine or interpersonal jealousy, which are common to both men and women employees. A few, about one-eighth, however, faced unpleasant situation with reasons of sexual overtones.

#### Women Workers in Unorganised Activities

Women workers employed in small informal organisations and households, or carrying on some activities on a self-employed basis face a different set of problems from those employed by formal establishments. In their cases the question of segregation and discrimination in employment as such are less important. Their problems primarily lie in the fact that they belong to the poor and disadvantaged groups and therefore, do not have access to better paid jobs, and facilities for improving their economic lot. And these problems are common to the men and women members of these groups. In a way they are more 'independent' and less subjugated to men, than those working as regular employees of formal establishments, and most of the time work as equal partners of men in their productive roles. But at the same time, they are mostly driven to work out of economic desperation of their households and suffer a greater degree of social exploitation than the women employees of establishments.



The study of three occupational groups of women workers in the non-establishment sector, reported in Chapter VII above, throws up a number of interesting details about their personal, family and work-related characteristics, and also brings out certain distinctions among the three groups. But the common characteristics of all the three groups are that they are engaged in activities which provide services directly to the households, generally of classes economically far superior to their own; have a disadvantage vis a vis buyers of their services, both because of their socio-economic position and somewhat dispensable nature of their services depending on technological and economic conditions; and, therefore, are able to eke out their living only at a minimum and stagnant level. These disadvantages are primarily attributable to their socio-economic background and shared commonly by men and women engaged in the trade. But the women workers also face some specific disadvantages, particularly when they do not have male members of their families also working with them. These disadvantages consist, on the one hand, of their inability to take up certain businesses related to their trade which requires more of out-of-home work and odd hours; and, on the other, of insecurity and restriction on their activities due to the attitude of their customers and general public towards them as women.

### Conclusion

A general conclusion that can be drawn from our study of the various aspects of employment of women in an Indian city is that the major

part of the disadvantage of women in employment, either in the form of small proportion of women in the workforces, or in the form of their clustering into low earnings and low status jobs, or lower current as well as life time earnings of women workers, is attributable to the general societal rather than to the limited labour market reasons. The widely held belief that the women's place is the home combined with the prevalent scarcity of job opportunities accounts for low proportion of women in employment. The same factors also contribute to a certain degree of discrimination that exists in recruitment, placement and promotions. Yet in certain occupations and jobs, women are preferred primarily because they are available at low wages, thus leading to some degree of segregation in the labour market. But this apparently economic reason for positive discrimination is buttressed by long nurtured belief that these jobs are better performed by women. But even in the jobs preferred by women and considered suitable for women for whatever reason, a strong tendency of segregation is unlikely to emerge as the overall scarcity ~~leads~~ leads men also to enter most of these jobs.

On discrimination in employment our findings demonstrate that discrimination against women is not merely statistical but real, though its extent is not very large. And post-entry discrimination is of larger magnitude than pre-entry. A point that needs to be noted

is that the real as well as perceived discrimination is higher in the case of illiterate, less educated women working in the small private establishments than of the better educated women working in the organised sector, especially in the publicly-owned and run undertakings. The former group of women workers also feel the existence of discrimination, both pre-entry and post-entry, much more severely than those belonging to the latter group, as revealed by their responses on this question. Thus it needs to be recognised that a good part of sex discrimination is, in fact, class-based discrimination. The comparison between the women working in the formal and in the informal sector also goes to support this proposition.

It is difficult to perceive that the disadvantage and discrimination of women in employment will get reduced in near future. For, the basic reason for the present situation lies in the societal attitudes which would take a long time to change. It is expected generally that the notion regarding women as secondary workers would disappear with increasing opportunities and education. But in the Indian situation job opportunities will have to rise at an inconceivably high rates to absorb all men and women potential workers, and the most of the few new jobs that could be created will mainly be taken by men. Education, on the other hand, is found to improve the disadvantage of women but mainly vis à vis the uneducated women and in comparison to the educated men.

It is, however, likely that a faster expansion of job opportunities in the public and organised sectors will prove advantageous to women, along with the spread of education amongst them. These sectors are found to be less discriminatory, and follow procedures of selection, placement and promotions which provide equal if not better opportunities to women. Any attempt at legislating to fix a proportion of women in employment, at this stage is, however, likely to prove self-defeating, given the overall scarcity of employment opportunities and the family structures in which men would be expected to be the first workers for quite some time to come. Reservation of jobs for women is, therefore, likely to benefit the women of better off classes, at the cost of men of poorer classes. The question of women workers belonging to poorer classes where a woman cannot afford to remain without work due to low incomes of the households, however, needs special consideration, mainly in terms of expanding work opportunities for them and raising productivity and incomes in the occupations they are engaged. The practice of fixing different statutory minimum wages, wherever, it is still followed also needs to be scrapped to protect the women working in the unorganised sector.